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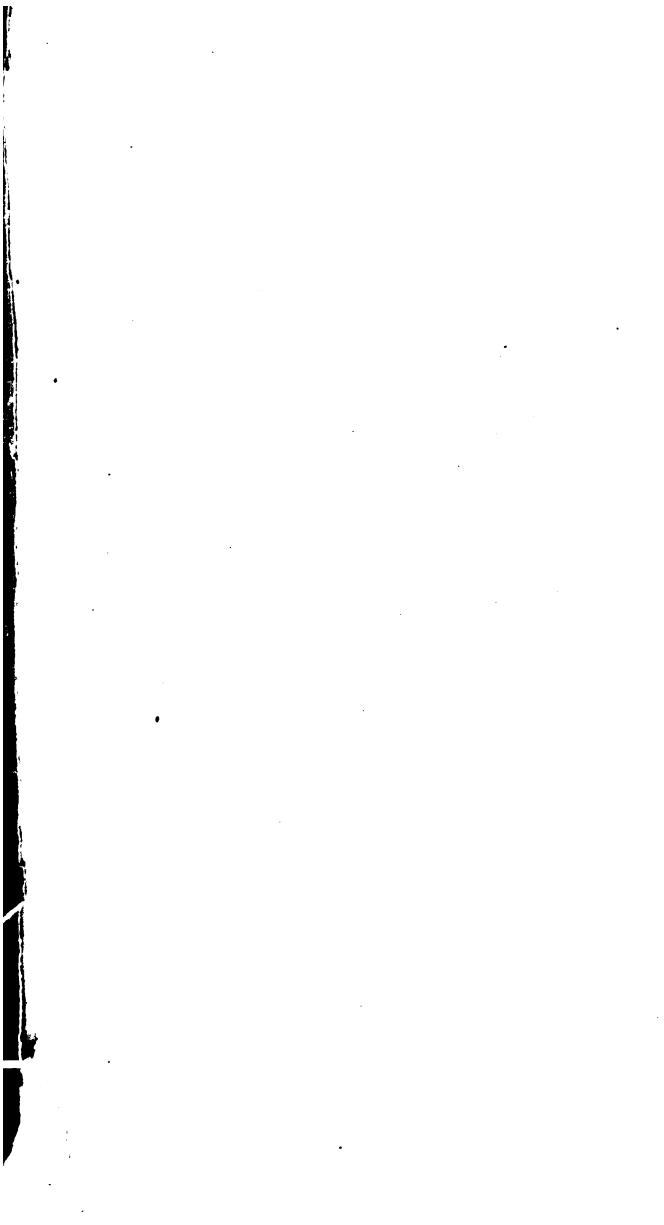

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Mr William Congreve

Vol. I. Title.

THE

WORKS

OF

MR. CONGREVE:

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

THE OLD BATCHELOR,
THE DOUBLE DEALER,
LOVE FOR LOVE.

THE SEVENTH EDITION.

To which is prefixed,

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

Printed for T. LOWNDES, T. CASLON, T. DAVIES,
W. NICOLL, S. BLADON, and R. SNAGG.

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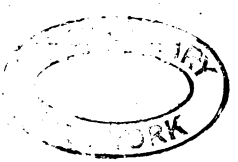

THE LIFE OF MR. CONGREVE.

WILLIAM CONGREVE, Eſq. was deſcended from the ancient Family of the *Congreves*, of *Congreve* in *Staffordſhire*, his Father being ſecond Son to *Richard Congreve*, of that Place.—Some Authors, and in particular Sir *James Ware*, contend for his having been born in *Ireland*; but as *Jacob*, who was particularly acquainted with him, and who in his Preface acknowledges his Obligations to Mr. *Congreve* for his Communication of what related to himſelf, has abſolutely contradicted that Report, I ſhall on his Authority, which I conſider to be the ſame as Mr. *Congreve's* own, fix the Spot of his Nativity at a place called *Bardſa*, not far from *Leeds* in *Yorkſhire*, being Part of the Eſtate of Sir *John Lewis*, his Great-Uncle by his Mother's Side.—It is certain, however, that he went over to that Kingdom very young.—For his

Father being only a younger Brother, and provided for in the Army by a Commiſſion on the *Iriſh* Eſtabliſhment, was compelled to undertake a Journey thither in Conſequence of his Command; which he afterwards parted with, to accept of the Management of a conſiderable Eſtate belonging to the *Burlington* Family, which fixed his Reſidence there.—However, though he ſuffered this Son to receive his firſt Tincture of Letters in the great School at *Kilkenny*, and afterwards to compleat his Claſſical Learning under the Direction of Dr. *Aſh*, in the Univerſity of *Dublin*; yet, being deſirous that his Studies ſhould be directed to Profit as well as Improvement, he ſent him over to *England* ſoon after the Revolution, and placed him as a Student in the *Temple*. The dry, plodding Study of the Law, however, was by no Means ſuitable to the ſprightly volatile Genius of Mr. *Congreve*; and therefore, though he did not want Application in thoſe Studies to which his Genius led him, yet he did not even attempt to make any Proficiency in a Service which he was probably conſcious he ſhould make no Figure in. Excellence and Perfection were what, it is apparent, he laid it down as his Principle, from the very firſt, to make it his Aim the acquiring; for in the very earlieſt Exertion of his Genius, and a very early one indeed it was, *viz.* his Novel, called *Love and Duty reconciled*, written when he was not above ſeventeen Years of Age, he had not only endeavoured at, but indeed ſucceeded in, the preſenting to the World not a meer Novel according to Taſte and Faſhion then prevailing, but a Piece which ſhould point out, and be in itſelf a Model of, what Novels ought to be. And though this cannot itſelf be called with Propriety a dramatic Work, yet he has ſo ſtrictly adhered to dramatic Rules in the Compoſition of it, that his arriving at ſo great a Degree of Perfection in the regular Drama, in ſo ſhort a Time afterwards, is hardly to be wondered at.—

His

His first Play was the *Old Batchelor*, and was the Amusement of some leisure Hours during a slow Recovery from a Fit of Illness, soon after his Return to *England*, and was in itself so perfect, that Mr. *Dryden*, on it's being shewn to him, declared he had never in his Life seen such a first Play; and that great Poet having, in Conjunction with Mr. *Southerne* and *Arthur Manwaring*, Esq. given it a slight Revisal, Dr. *Davenant*, who was the Manager of *Drury Lane* Theatre, and was delighted both with the Piece and its Author, brought it on the Stage in 1693, where it met with such universal Approbation, that Mr. *Congreve*, though he was but nineteen Years of Age at the Time of his writing it, became now considered as a Prop to the declining Stage, and a rising Genius in dramatic Poetry.

The next Year he produced the *Double Dealer*, which, for what Reason however I know not, did not meet with so much Success as the former. The Merit of his first Play, however, had obtained him the Favour and Patronage of Lord *Halifax*, and some peculiar Marks of Distinction from Queen *Mary*, on whose Death, which happened in the Close of this Year, he wrote a very elegant Elegiac Pastoral.

In 1695, when *Betterton* opened the new House in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, Mr. *Congreve* joining with him, gave him his Comedy of *Love for Love*; with which the Company opened their Campaign, and which met with such Success, that they immediately offered the Author a Share in the Management of the House, on Condition of his furnishing them with one Play yearly. This Offer he accepted of; but whether through Indolence, or that Correctness which he looked on as necessary to his Works, his *Mourning Bride* did not come out till 1697, nor his *Way of the World*

World till two Years after that. The indifferent Succeſs this laſt-mentioned Play, though an exceeding good one, met from the Public, compleated that Diſguſt to the Theatre, which a long Conteſt with *Jeremy Collier*, who had attacked the Immoralities of the *Engliſh* Stage, and more eſpecially ſome of his Pieces, had begun; and he determined never more to write for the Stage—This Reſolution he punctually kept, and Mr. *Dennis's* Obſervation on that Point will, I am afraid, be found but too true, when he ſaid, "that "Mr. *Congreve* quitted the Stage early, and that "Comedy left it with him."—Yet, though he quitted dramatic Writing, he did not lay down the Pen entirely; but occaſionally wrote many little Pieces both in Proſe and Verſe, all of which ſtand on the Records of literary Fame.

It is very poſſible, however, that he might not ſo ſoon have given Way to this Diſguſt, had not the Eaſineſs of his Circumſtances rendered any Subſervience to the Opinions and Caprice of the Town abſolutely unneceſſary to him. For his Abilities having very early in Life raiſed him to the Acquaintance of the Earl of *Halifax*, who was then the *Mæcenas* of the Age, that Nobleman, deſirous of raiſing ſo promiſing a Genius above the Neceſſity of too haſty Productions, made him one of the Commiſſioners for licenſing Hackney-Coaches, or, according to *Coxeter*, a Commiſſioner of the *Wine Licence*. He ſoon after beſtowed on him a Place in the *Pipe-Office*; and not long after that, gave him a Poſt in the Cuſtoms, worth ſix hundred Pounds *per Annum*.

In the Year 1718, he was appointed Secretary of *Jamaica*, ſo that, with all together, his Income towards the latter Part of his Life was upwards of twelve hundred Pounds a Year. Thus raiſed above Dependance,

dance, it is no Wonder he would no longer render himſelf ſubject to the capricious Cenſures of impotent Critics. And had his poetical Father, Mr. *Dryden*, ever been raiſed to the ſame Circumſtances, it is probable that his *All for Love* would not now have been eſteemed the beſt of his dramatic Pieces, nor would he have been compelled for a bare Livelihood to the Drudgery of producing four Plays in a Space of Time ſcarce more than ſufficient for forming the Plot of one.

But to return to *Congreve*.—The greateſt Part of the laſt twenty Years of his Life was ſpent in Eaſe and Retirement, and he either did not, or affected not to give himſelf any Trouble about Reputation.—Yet ſome Part of that Conduct might proceed from a Degree of Pride. *T. Cibber*, in his Lives of the Poets, Vol. IV. p. 93. relates an Anecdote of him, which I cannot properly omit here—"When the celebrated *Voltaire*, "ſays he, was in *England*, he waited upon *Congreve*, "and paſſed him ſome Compliments as to the Reputa- "tion and Merit of his Works.—*Congreve* thanked him, "but at the ſame Time told that ingenious Foreigner, "*he did not chuſe to be conſidered as an* Author, *but only* "*as a* private Gentleman, *and in that Light expected to* "*be viſited.*—*Voltaire* anſwered, *That if he had never been* "*any Thing* but *a private Gentleman, in all Probability* "*he had never been troubled with* that *Viſit.*—And ob- "ſerves in his own Account of the Tranſaction, that "he was not a little diſguſted with ſo unſeaſonable a "Piece of Vanity."

Towards the Cloſe of his Life he was much afflicted with the Gout; and making a Tour to *Bath*, for the Benefit of the Waters, was unfortunately overturned in his Chariot, by which it is ſuppoſed he got ſome inward Bruiſe, as he ever after complained of a Pain in his Side; and on his Return to *London*, continued gradually declining in his Health, till the 19th of *Jan.*

1729, when he died, aged 57, at his House in *Surry-Street*, in the *Strand*, and on the 26th following was buried in *Westminster-Abbey*, the Pall being supported by Persons of the first Distinction.

His dramatic Pieces are seven in Number, and their Titles as follow:

1. *Old Batchelor.* C.
2. *Double Dealer.* C.
3. *Love for Love.* C.
4. *Mourning Bride.* T.
5. *Way of the World.* C.
6. *Judgement of* PARIS. Masq.
7. SEMELE. Oratorio.

THE

F. Hayman inv. et del. C. Grignion sculp.

The Old Bachelor.

THE

OLD BATCHELOR:

A

COMEDY.

Quem tulit ad Scenam ventoſo gloria curru,
Exanimat lentus ſpectator; ſedulus inflat.
Sic leve, ſic parvum eſt, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit, aut reficit—

Horat. Lib. II. Epiſt. i.

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES,

Lord CLIFFORD, of LANESBOROUGH, &c.

MY LORD,

IT is with a great deal of Pleaſure, that I lay hold on this firſt Occaſion, which the Accidents of my Life have given me, of writing to your Lordſhip: for, ſince at the ſame time I write to all the World, it will be a means of publiſhing (what I would have every body know) the Reſpect and Duty which I owe and pay to you. I have ſo much Inclination to be yours, that I need no other Engagement: but the particular Ties, by which I am bound to your Lordſhip and Family, have put it out of my Power to make you any Compliment; ſince all Offers of myſelf, will amount to no more than an honeſt Acknowledgment, and only ſhew a Willingneſs in me to be grateful.

I am very near wiſhing that it were not ſo much my Intereſt to be your Lordſhip's Servant, that it might be more my Merit; not that I would avoid being obliged to you, but I would have my own Choice to run me into the Debt, that I might have

it

it to boaſt, I had diſtinguiſhed a Man to whom I would be glad to be obliged, even without the Hopes of having it in my Power ever to make him a Return.

It is impoſſible for me to come near your Lordſhip in any kind, and not to receive ſome Favour; and while in appearance I am only making an Acknowledgment (with the uſual under-hand dealing of the World), I am at the ſame time inſinuating my own Intereſt. I cannot give your Lordſhip your due, without tacking a Bill of my own Privileges. 'Tis true, if a Man never committed a Folly, he would never ſtand in need of a Protection: but then Power would have nothing to do, and Good-nature no Occaſion to ſhew itſelf; and, where thoſe Qualities are, 'tis pity they ſhould want Objects to ſhine upon. I muſt confeſs this is no reaſon why a Man ſhould do an idle thing, nor indeed any good Excuſe for it when done; yet it reconciles the Uſes of ſuch Authority and Goodneſs, to the Neceſſities of our Follies; and is a ſort of Poetical Logick, which at this Time I would make uſe of, to argue your Lordſhip into a Protection of this Play. It is the firſt Offence I have committed in this kind, or indeed in any kind of Poetry, though not the firſt made public; and, therefore, I hope will the more eaſily be pardoned: but had it been acted when it was firſt written, more might have been ſaid in its behalf; Ignorance of the Town and Stage would then have been Excuſes in a young Writer, which now almoſt four Years Experience will ſcarce allow of. Yet I muſt declare myſelf ſenſible of the Good-nature of the Town, in receiving this Play ſo kindly, with all its Faults, which I muſt own were, for the moſt part, very induſtriouſly covered by the Care of the Players; for, I think, ſcarce a Character but received all the Advantage it would admit of, from the Juſtneſs of the Action.

As for the Criticks, my Lord, I have nothing to ſay to, or againſt, any of them of any kind; from thoſe who make juſt Exceptions, to thoſe who find fault in the wrong place. I will only make this general Anſwer in behalf of my Play (an Anſwer which *Epictetus* adviſes every Man to make for himſelf to his Cenſurers), *viz. That if they who find ſome Faults in it were as intimate with it as I am, they would find a great many more.* This is a Confeſſion, which I needed not to have made; but however, I can draw this Uſe from it, to my own Advantage, that I think there are no Faults in it but what I do know; which, as I take it, is the firſt Step to an Amendment.

Thus I may live in hopes (ſome time or other) of making the Town amends; but you, my Lord, I never can, though I am ever

Your LORDSHIP's

moſt Obedient, and

moſt Humble Servant,

WILL. CONGREVE.

To Mr. CONGREVE.

WHEN Virtue in purſuit of Fame appears,
And for reward ſhoots the Growth beyond the Years,
We timely court the riſing Hero's Cauſe;
And on his ſide, the Poet wiſhly draws;
Beſpeaking him hereafter, by Applauſe.
The Days will come, when we ſhall all receive
Returning Intereſt, from what now we give:
Inſtructed, and ſupported by that Praiſe,
And Reputation, which we ſtrive to raiſe.
Nature ſo coy, ſo hardly to be woo'd,
Flies, like a Miſtreſs, but to be purſu'd.
O Congreve! boldly follow on the Chaſe;
She looks behind, and wants thy ſtrong Embrace:
She yields, ſhe yields, ſurrenders all her Charms,
Do you but force her gently to your Arms:
Such Nerves, ſuch Graces, in your Lines appear,
As you were made to be her Raviſher.
Dryden *has long extended his Command,*
By Right Divine, quite through the Muſes Land,
Abſolute Lord; and holding now from none,
But great Apollo, *his undoubted Crown:*
(That Empire ſettled, and grown old in Pow'r)
Can wiſh for nothing, but a Succeſſor:
Not to enlarge his Limits, but maintain
Thoſe Provinces, which he alone could gain.
His eldeſt Wycherly, *in wiſe Retreat,*
Thought it not worth his Quiet to be Great.
Looſe, wand'ring Etherege, *in wild Pleaſures toſt,*
And foreign Int'reſts, to his Hopes long loſt:
Poor Lee *and* Otway *dead!* Congreve *appears,*
The Darling, and laſt Comfort of his Years:

Mirſt

May'ſt thou live long in thy great Maſter's Smiles,
And, growing under him, adorn theſe Iſles:
But when—when part of him (be that but late!)
His Body yielding muſt ſubmit to Fate,
Leaving his deathleſs Works, and Thee behind
(The natural Succeſſor of his Mind),
Then may'ſt thou finiſh what he has begun:
Heir to his Merit, be in Fame his Son.
What thou haſt done, ſhews all is in thy Pow'r;
And to write better, only muſt write more.
'Tis ſomething to be willing to commend;
But my beſt Praiſe is, that I am your Friend.

THO. SOUTHERNE.

To Mr. CONGREVE.

THE Danger's great, in these censorious Days,
When Criticks are so rife, to venture Praise:
When the infectious and ill-natur'd Brood
Behold, and damn the Work, because 'tis good;
And, with a proud, ungenerous Spirit, try
To pass an Ostracism on Poetry.
But you, my Friend, your Worth does safely bear
Above their Spleen; you have no Cause for Fear;
Like a well-mettled Hawk, you took your Flight
Quite out of Reach, and almost out of Sight.
As the strong Sun, in a fair Summer's Day,
You rise, and drive the Mists and Clouds away,
The Owls and Bats, and all the Birds of Prey.
Each Line of yours, like polish'd Steel, 's so hard,
In Beauty safe, it wants no other Guard.
Nature her self 's beholden to your Dress,
Which, tho' still like, much fairer you express.
Some, vainly striving Honour to obtain,
Leave to their Heirs the Traffick of their Brain,
Like China *under Ground, the ripening Ware,*
In a long time, perhaps, grows worth our Care:
But you now reap the Fame, so well you've sown;
The Planter tastes his Fruit to Ripeness grown.
As a fair Orange-tree at once is seen
Big with what's ripe, yet springing still with green;
So, at one Time, my worthy Friend appears
With all the Sap of Youth, and Weight of Years.
Accept my pious Love, as forward Zeal,
Which, though it ruins me, I can't conceal.
Expos'd to Censure, for my weak Applause,
I'm pleas'd to suffer in so just a Cause:
And, though my Off'ring may unworthy prove,
Take, as a Friend, the Wishes of my Love.

J. MARSH.

TO

To Mr. CONGREVE,

On his Play, called, *The Old Batchelor.*

WIT, like true Gold, refin'd from all Alloy,
Immortal is, and never can decay.
'Tis in all Times and Languages the ſame;
Nor can an ill Tranſlation quench the Flame;
For, though the Form and Faſhion don't remain,
Th' intrinſick Value ſtill it will retain.
Then let each ſtudied Scene be writ with Art;
And Judgement ſweat to form the labour'd Part;
Each Character be juſt, and Nature ſeem;
Without th' Ingredient, Wit, 'tis all but Phlegm;
For that's the Soul which all the Maſs muſt move,
And wake our Paſſions into Grief, or Love.
But you, too bounteous, ſow your Wit ſo thick,
We are ſurpriz'd, and know not where to pick;
And, while with Clapping we are juſt to you,
Ourſelves we injure, and loſe ſomething new.
What mayn't we then, great Youth, of thee preſage,
Whoſe Art and Wit ſo much tranſcend thy Age?
How wilt thou ſhine at thy Meridian Height,
Who, at thy Riſing, giv'ſt ſo vaſt a Light!
When Dryden, *dying, ſhall the World deceive,*
Whom we immortal, as his Works, believe;
Thou ſhalt ſucceed, the Glory of the Stage,
Adorn and entertain the coming Age.

BEVIL HIGGONS.

PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE,

Intended for *The Old Batchelor*.

Written by the Lord FALKLAND.

MOST Authors on the Stage at firſt appear,
Like Widows Bridegrooms, full of Doubt and Fear:
They judge, from the Experience of the Dame,
How hard a Taſk it is to quench her Flame:
And who falls ſhort of furniſhing a Courſe,
Up to his brawny Predeceſſor's Force,
With utmoſt Rage from her Embraces thrown,
Remains convicted, as an empty Drone.
Thus often, to his Shame, a pert Beginner
Proves, in the End, a miſerable Sinner.
As for our Youngſter, I am apt to doubt him,
With all the Vigour of his Youth about him.
But he, more ſanguine, truſts in one and twenty,
And impudently hopes he ſhall content you:
For, though his Batchelor be worn and cold,
He thinks the Young may club to help the Old;
And what alone can be atchiev'd by neither
Is often brought about by both together.
The briſkeſt of you all have felt Alarms,
Finding the Fair-one proſtitute her Charms,
With broken Sighs, in her old Fumbler's Arms.
But, for our Spark, he ſwears he'll ne'er be jealous
Of any Rivals, but young luſty Fellows.
Faith! let him try his Chance. And, if the Slave,
After his Bragging, prove a waſhy Knave,
May he be baniſh'd to ſome lonely Den,
And never more have Leave to dip his Pen!
But, if he be the Champion he pretends,
Both Sexes, ſure, will join to be his Friends;
For all agree, where all can have their Ends.
And you muſt own him for a Man of Might,
If he holds out to pleaſe you the third Night.

PROLOGUE.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

HOW this vile World is chang'd! In former Days,
Prologues were ſerious Speeches before Plays;
Grave, ſolemn Things (as Graces are to Feaſts);
Where Poets begg'd a Bleſſing from their Gueſts.
But, now, no more like Suppliants we come;
A Play makes War, and Prologue is the Drum.
Arm'd with keen Satire, and with pointed Wit,
We threaten you, who do for Judges ſit,
To ſave our Plays; or elſe we'll damn your Pit.
But, for your Comfort, it falls out To-day,
We've a young Author, and his firſt-born Play:
So, ſtanding only on his good Behaviour,
He's very civil, and entreats your Favour.
Not but the Man has Malice, would he ſhew it:
But, on my Conſcience! he's a baſhful Poet;
You think that ſtrange—no matter, he'll outgrow it.
Well, I'm his Advocate—by me he prays you
(I don't know whether I ſhall ſpeak to pleaſe you);
He prays—O bleſs me! what ſhall I do now?
Hang me, if I know what he prays, or how!
And 'twas the prettieſt Prologue as he wrote it!
Well, the Deuce take me, if I han't forgot it.
O Lord! for Heaven's Sake! excuſe the Play;
Becauſe, you know, if it be damn'd To-day,
I ſhall be hang'd, for wanting what to ſay.
For my Sake then—but I'm in ſuch Confuſion,
I cannot ſtay to hear your Reſolution.

[Runs off.

DRA-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Heartwell, a ſurly old Batchelor, pretending to ſlight Women, ſecretly in Love wtih *Sylvia*,	Mr. BERRY.
Bellmour, in Love with *Belinda*,	Mr. PACKER.
Vainlove, capricious in his Love; in Love with *Araminta*,	Mr. PALMER.
Sharper,	Mr. HAVARD.
Sir *Joſeph Wittoll*,	Mr. WOODWARD.
Captain *Bluffe*,	Mr. YATES.
Fondlewife, a Banker,	Mr. FOOTE.
Setter, a Pimp,	Mr. BLAKES.
Servant to *Fondlewife*.	

W O M E N.

Araminta, in Love with *Vainlove*,	Mrs. DAVIES.
Belinda, her Couſin, an affected Lady, in Love with *Bellmour*,	Mrs. HOUGHTON.
Lætitia, Wife to *Fondlewife*,	Mrs. PRITCHARD.
Sylvia, *Vainlove's* forſaken Miſtreſs,	Mrs. COOPER.
Lucy, her Maid,	Mrs. BENNET.
Betty.	
Boy and Footmen.	

SCENE, *LONDON*.

THE OLD BATCHELOR.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

BELLMOUR *and* VAINLOVE *meeting.*

Bellm. *Vainlove*! and abroad ſo early! Good Morrow. I thought a Contemplative Lover could no more have parted with his Bed in a Morning, than he could have ſlept in't.

Vainl. Bellmour, Good Morrow—Why truth on't is, theſe early Sallies are not uſual to me; but Buſineſs, as you ſee, Sir—[*ſhewing Letters.*] And Buſineſs muſt be followed, or be loſt.

Bellm. Buſineſs!—And ſo muſt Time, my Friend, be cloſe purſued, or loſt. Buſineſs is the Rub of Life, perverts our Aim, caſts off the Bias, and leaves us wide and ſhort of the intended Mark.

Vainl. Pleaſure, I gueſs, you mean.

Bellm. Ay, what elſe has Meaning?

Vainl. Oh the Wiſe will tell you—

Bellm. More than they believe—or underſtand.

Vainl. How, how, *Ned*; a wiſe man ſay more than he underſtands!

Bellm. Ay, ay, Wiſdom's nothing but a pretending to know and believe more than we really do. You read of but one wiſe Man; and all that he knew was, that he knew nothing. Come, come, leave Buſineſs to Idlers, and Wiſdom to Fools; they have need of them: Wit, be my Faculty; and Pleaſure, my Occupation;

pation: and let Father Time ſhake his Glaſs. Let low and earthly Souls grovel till they have worked themſelves ſix Feet deep into a Grave. Buſineſs is not my Element—I rowl in a higher Orb, and dwell—

Vainl. In Caſtles i'th' Air of thy own building; That's thy Element, *Ned.* Well, as high a Flyer as you are, I have a Lure may make you ſtoop. [*Flings a Letter.*

Bellm. I marry Sir, I have a Hawk's Eye at a Woman's hand—There's more Elegancy in the falſe Spelling of this Superſcription [*Takes up the Letter*] than in all *Cicero*—Let me ſee—How now! *Dear perfidious* Vainlove. [*Reads.*

Vainl. Hold, hold: 'slife! that's the wrong.

Bellm. Nay let's ſee the Name (*Sylvia!*) How canſt thou be ungrateful to that Creature? She's extremely pretty, and loves thee intirely—I have heard her breathe ſuch Raptures about thee—

Vainl. Ay, or any body that ſhe's about—

Bellm. No faith, *Frank*, you wrong her; ſhe has been juſt to you.

Vainl. That's pleaſant, by my troth, from thee, who haſt had her.

Bellm. Never—her Affections: 'Tis true, by Heaven: ſhe own'd it to my Face; and (bluſhing like the Virgin Morn, when it diſclos'd the Cheat which that truſty Bawd of Nature, Night, had hid) confeſs'd her Soul was true to you; tho' I by Treachery had ſtol'n the Bliſs—

Vainl. So was true as Turtle—in Imagination, *Ned*, ha? Preach this Doctrine to Huſbands, and the married Women will adore thee.

Bellm. Why, faith, I think it will do well enough—If the Huſband be out of the way, for the Wife to ſhew her Fondneſs and Impatience of his Abſence, by chuſing a Lover as like him as ſhe can; and what is unlike, ſhe may help out with her own Fancy.

Vainl. But is it not an Abuſe to the Lover, to be made a Blind of?

Bellm.

Bellm. As you ſay, the Abuſe is to the Lover, not the Huſband: For 'tis an Argument of her great Zeal towards him, that ſhe will enjoy him in Effigie.

Vainl. It muſt be a very ſuperſtitious Country, where ſuch Zeal paſſes for true Devotion. I doubt it will be damn'd by all our Proteſtant Huſbands for flat Idolatry—But if you can make Alderman *Fondlewife* of your Perſuaſion, this Letter will be needleſs.

Bellm. What, the old Banker with the handſome Wife?

Vainl. Ay.

Bellm. Let me ſee—*Lætitia!* Oh 'tis a delicious Morſel. Dear *Frank*, thou art the trueſt Friend in the World.

Vainl. Ay, am I not? To be continually ſtarting of Hares for you to courſe. We were certainly cut out for one another; for my Temper quits an Amour, juſt where thine takes it up—But read that; it is an Appointment for me, this Evening; when *Fondlewife* will be gone out of Town, to meet the Maſter of a Ship, about the Return of a Venture which he's in danger of loſing. Read, read.

Bellm. reads. Hum, hum—*Out of Town this Evening, and talks of ſending for Mr.* Spintext *to keep me Company; but I'll take care, he ſhall not be at home.* Good! *Spintext!* Oh the Fanatick one-ey'd Parſon!

Vainl. Ay.

Bellm. reads. Hum, Hum—*That your Converſation will be much more agreeable, if you can counterfeit his Habit, to blind the Servants.* Very good! Then I muſt be diſguiſed—With all my Heart—It adds a Guſto to an Amour; gives it the greater Reſemblance of Theft; and among us lewd Mortals, the deeper the Sin the ſweeter. *Frank*, I'm amaz'd at thy Good-nature—

Vainl. Faith, I hate Love when 'tis forced upon a Man, as I do Wine—And this Buſineſs is none of my ſeeking; I only happened to be once or twice, where *Lætitia* was the handſomeſt Woman in Company, ſo

conſequently applied myſelf to her—And it ſeems ſhe has taken me at my Word—Had you been there, or any body, it had been the ſame.

Bellm. I wiſh I may ſucceed as the ſame.

Vainl. Never doubt it; for if the Spirit of Cuckoldom be once raiſed up in a Woman, the Devil can't lay it, till ſhe has don't.

Bellm. Prithee, what ſort of Fellow is *Fondlewife?*

Vainl. A kind of Mongrel Zealot, ſometimes very preciſe and peeviſh; but I have ſeen him pleaſant enough in his Way: Much addicted to Jealouſy, but more to Fondneſs: So that, as he is often jealous without a Cauſe, he's as often ſatisfied without Reaſon.

Bellm. A very even Temper, and fit for my Purpoſe. I muſt get your Man *Setter* to provide my Diſguiſe.

Vainl. Ay, you may take him for good and all if you will, for you have made him fit for nobody elſe—Well—

Bellm. You're going to viſit in return of *Sylvia's* Letter—Poor Rogue! Any Hour of the Day or Night will ſerve her—But do you know nothing of a new Rival there?

Vainl. Yes, *Heartwell*, that ſurly, old, pretended Woman-hater, thinks her virtuous; that's one Reaſon why I fail her: I would have her fret herſelf out of Conceit with me, that ſhe may entertain ſome Thoughts of him. I know he viſits her every Day.

Bellm. Yet rails on ſtill, and thinks his Love unknown to us; a little Time will ſwell him ſo, he muſt be forced to give it Birth; and the Diſcovery muſt needs be very pleaſant from himſelf; to ſee what Pains he will take, and how he will ſtrain to be delivered of a Secret, when he has miſcarried of it already.

Vainl. Well, good Morrow, let's dine together; I'll meet at the old Place.

Bellm. With all my Heart; it lies convenient for us to pay our Afternoon Services to our Miſtreſſes. I find

I am

I am damnably in Love, I'm ſo uneaſy for not having ſeen *Belinda* Yeſterday.

Vainl. But I ſaw my *Araminta*, yet am as impatient.

SCENE II.

BELLMOUR *alone.*

Bellm. Why what a Cormorant in Love am I! who, not contented with the Slavery of honourable Love in one Place, and the Pleaſure of enjoying ſome half a ſcore Miſtreſſes of my own acquiring; muſt yet take *Vainlove's* Buſineſs upon my Hands, becauſe it lay too heavy upon his; ſo am not only forced to lie with others Mens Wives for them, but muſt alſo undertake the harder Taſk of obliging their Miſtreſſes!—I muſt take up, or I ſhall never hold out; Fleſh and Blood cannot bear it always.

SCENE III.

[*To him*] SHARPER.

Sharp. I'm ſorry to ſee this, *Ned:* Once a Man comes to his Soliloquies, I give him for gone.

Bellm. Sharper, I'm glad to ſee thee.

Sharp. What, is *Belinda* cruel, that you are ſo thoughtful?

Bellm. No faith, not for that—But there's a Buſineſs of Conſequence fall'n out to Day, that requires ſome Conſideration.

Sharp. Prithee what mighty Buſineſs of Conſequence canſt thou have?

Bellm. Why you muſt know, 'tis a piece of Work toward the finiſhing of an Alderman; it ſeems I muſt put the laſt hand to it, and dub him Cuckold, that he may be of equal Dignity with the reſt of his Brethren: So I muſt beg *Belinda's* Pardon.—

Sharp. Faith e'en give her over for good-and-all; you can have no hopes of getting her for a Miſtreſs;

and ſhe is too proud, too inconſtant, too affected, too witty, and too handſome for a Wife.

Bellm. But ſhe can't have too much Money—There's twelve thouſand Pounds, *Tom.*—'Tis true ſhe is exceſſively foppiſh and affected, but in my Conſcience I believe the Baggage loves me; for ſhe never ſpeaks well of me herſelf, nor ſuffers any body elſe to rail at me. Then, as I told you, there's twelve thouſand Pounds—Hum—Why faith, upon ſecond Thoughts, ſhe does not appear to be ſo very affected neither—Give her her due, I think the Woman's a Woman, and that's all. As ſuch, I'm ſure I ſhall like her; for the Devil take me if I don't love all the Sex.

Sharp. And here comes one who ſwears as heartily he hates all the Sex.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] HEARTWELL.

Bellm. Who, *Heartwell!* Ay, but he knows better things—How now, *George*, where haſt thou been, ſnarling odious Truths, and entertaining Company, like a Phyſician, with Diſcourſe of their Diſeaſes and Infirmities? What fine Lady haſt thou been putting out of Conceit with herſelf, and perſuading that the Face ſhe had been making all the Morning was none of her own? for I know thou art as unmannerly and as unwelcome to a Woman, as a Looking-glaſs after the Small-pox.

Heart. I confeſs I have not been ſneering fulſome Lyes and nauſeous Flattery, nor fawning upon a little tawdry Whore, that will fawn upon me again, and entertain any Puppy that comes, like a Tumbler, with the ſame Tricks over and over. For ſuch, I gueſs, may have been your late Employment.

Bellm. Would thou hadſt come a little ſooner! *Vainlove* would have wrought thy Converſion, and been a Champion for the Cauſe.

Heart.

Heart. What, has he been here? that's one of Love's *April*-Fools, is always upon ſome Errand that's to no purpoſe, ever embarking in Adventures, yet never comes to Harbour.

Sharp. That's becauſe he always ſets out in foul Weather, loves to buffet with the Winds, meet the Tide, and ſail in the Teeth of Oppoſition.

Heart. What, has he not dropt Anchor at *Araminta*?

Bellm. Truth on't is, ſhe fits his Temper beſt, is a kind of a floating Iſland; ſometimes ſeems in Reach, then vaniſhes, and keeps him buſied in the Search.

Sharp. She had need have a good Share of Senſe, to manage ſo *capricious* a Lover.

Bellm. Faith, I don't know. He's of a Temper the moſt eaſy to himſelf in the World; he takes as much always of an Amour as he cares for, and quits it when it grows ſtale and unpleaſant.

Sharp. An Argument of very little Paſſion, very good Underſtanding, and very ill Nature.

Heart. And proves that *Vainlove* plays the Fool with Diſcretion.

Sharp. You, *Bellmour*, are bound in Gratitude to ſtickle for him; you with Pleaſure reap that Fruit, which he takes Pains to ſow; he does the Drudgery in the Mine, and you ſtamp your Image on the Gold.

Bellm. He's of another Opinion, and ſays I do the Drudgery in the Mine. Well, we have each our Share of Sport, and each that which he likes beſt; 'tis his Diverſion to ſet, 'tis mine to cover the Partridge.

Heart. And it ſhould be mine to let them go again.

Sharp. Not till you had mouth'd a little, *George*; I think that's all thou art fit for now.

Heart. Good Mr. Young-fellow, you're miſtaken. As able as yourſelf, and as nimble too, though I may'nt have ſo much Mercury in my Limbs. 'Tis true, indeed, I don't force Appetite, but wait the natural Call of my Luſt; and think it Time enough to be lewd, after I have had the Temptation.

Bellm. Time enough: ay, too ſoon, I ſhould rather have expected from a Perſon of your Gravity.

Heart. Yet it is oftentimes too late with ſome of you young, termagant, flaſhy Sinners—you have all the Guilt of the Intention, and none of the Pleaſure of the Practice—'tis true, you are ſo eager in Purſuit of the Temptation, that you ſave the Devil the Trouble of leading you into it. Nor is it out of Diſcretion, that you don't ſwallow that very Hook yourſelves have baited: but you are cloyed with the Preparative; and what you mean for a Whet, turns the Edge of your puny Stomachs. Your Love is like your Courage, which you ſhew, for the firſt Year or two, upon all Occaſions, till in a little Time, being diſabled or diſarmed, you abate of your Vigour; and that daring Blade, which was ſo often drawn, is bound to the Peace for ever after.

Bellm. Thou art an old Fornicator, of a ſingular good Principle, indeed! and art for encouraging Youth, that they may be as wicked as thou art at thy Years.

Heart. I am for having every body be what they pretend to be; a Whoremaſter be a Whoremaſter; and not, like *Vainlove*, kiſs a Lap-dog with Paſſion, when it would diſguſt him from the Lady's own Lips.

Bellm. That only happens ſometimes, where the Dog has the ſweeter Breath, for the more cleanly Conveyance. But, *George*, you muſt not quarrel with little Gallantries of this Nature; Women are often won by them. Who would refuſe to kiſs a Lap-dog, if it were preliminary to the Lips of his Lady?

Sharp. Or omit playing with her Fan, and cooling her if ſhe were hot, when it might entitle him to the Office of warming her when ſhe ſhould be cold?

Bellm. What is it to read a Play in a rainy Day, though you ſhould be now and then interrupted in a witty Scene, and ſhe perhaps preſerve her Laughter till

till the Jeſt were over? Even that may be borne with, conſidering the Reward in Proſpect.

Heart. I confeſs, you that are Women's Aſſes bear greater Burdens; are forced to undergo Dreſſing, Dancing, Singing, Sighing, Whining, Rhyming, Flattering, Lying, Grinning, Cringing, and the Drudgery of Loving to boot.

Bellm. O Brute! the Drudgery of Loving!

Heart. Ay. Why, to come to Love through all theſe Incumbrances is like coming to an Eſtate overcharged with Debts, which, by the Time you have paid, yields no further Profit than what the bare Tillage and Manuring of the Land will produce at the Expence of your own Sweat.

Bellm. Prithee, how doſt thou love?

Sharp. He! he hates the Sex.

Heart. So I hate Phyſick too—yet I may love to take it for my Health.

Bellm. Well come off, *George*, if at any Time you ſhould be taken ſtraying.

Sharp. He has need of ſuch an Excuſe, conſidering the preſent State of his Body.

Heart. How d'ye mean?

Sharp. Why, if Whoring be Purging (as you call it), then, I may ſay, Marriage is entering into a Courſe of Phyſick.

Bellm. How! *George:* Does the Wind blow there?

Heart. It will as ſoon blow *North* and by *South*—Marry, quotha! I hope in Heaven I have a greater Portion of Grace; and I think I have baited too many of thoſe Traps, to be caught in one myſelf.

Bellm. Who, the Devil! would have thee, unleſs 'twere an Oyſter-woman, to propagate young Fry for *Billingſgate?*—Thy Talent will never recommend thee to any Thing of better Quality.

Heart. My Talent is chiefly that of ſpeaking Truth; which I don't expect ſhould ever recommend me to People of Quality. I thank Heaven, I have

very honeſtly purchaſed the Hatred of all the great Families in Town.

Sharp. And you, in return of Spleen, hate them. But, could you hope to be received into the Alliance of a noble Family—

Heart. No, I hope I ſhall never merit that Affliction—to be puniſhed with a Wife of Birth—be a Stag of the firſt Head, and bear my Horns aloft, like one of the Supporters of my Wife's Coat. 'Sdeath! I would not be a Cuckold to ever an illuſtrious Whore in *England.*

Bellm. What, not to make your Family, Man! and provide for your Children!

Sharp. For *her* Children, you mean.

Heart. Ay, there you have nickt it—there's the Devil upon Devil—O the Pride and Joy of Heart 'twould be to me, to have my Son and Heir reſemble ſuch a Duke—to have a fleering Coxcomb ſcoff and cry, Mr. your Son's mighty like his Grace, has juſt his Smile and Air of's Face. Then replies another, —Methinks he has more of the Marquis of ſuch a Place about his Noſe and Eyes; though he has my Lord what-d'ye-call's Mouth to a Tittle. Then I, to put it off as unconcerned, come chuck the Infant under the Chin, force a Smile, and cry, Ay, the Boy takes after his Mother's Relations—when the Devil and ſhe know, 'tis a little Compound of the whole Body of Nobility.

Bell. and *Sharp.* Ha, ha, ha.

Bell. Well! but, *George*, I have one Queſtion to aſk you—

Heart. Pſhaw! I have prattled away my Time—I hope you are in no haſte for an Anſwer—for I ſhan't ſtay now. [*Looking on his Watch.*

Bellm. Nay, prithee, *George*—

Heart. No; beſides my Buſineſs, I ſee a Fool coming this Way. Adieu.

SCENE

SCENE V.

SHARPER, BELLMOUR.

Bellm. What does he mean! O! 'tis Sir *Joſeph Wittol*, with his Friend; but I ſee he has turned the Corner, and goes another Way.

Sharp. What, in the Name of Wonder, is it?

Bellm. Why, a Fool.

Sharp. 'Tis a tawdry Outſide.

Bellm. And a very beggarly Lining—yet he may be worth your Acquaintance—a little of thy Chemiſtry, *Tom*, may extract Gold from that Dirt.

Sharp. Say you ſo? Faith! I am as poor as a Chemiſt, and would be as induſtrious. But what was he that followed him? Is not he a Dragon, that watches thoſe Golden-pippins?

Bellm. Hang him; no; he a Dragon! If he be, 'tis a very peaceful one: I can enſure his Anger dormant; or, ſhould he ſeem to rouze, 'tis but well laſhing him, and he will ſleep like a Top.

Sharp. Ay! is he of that Kidney?

Bellm. Yet is adored by that Bigot Sir *Joſeph Wittol*, as the Image of Valour. He calls him his Back; and, indeed, they are never aſunder—yet laſt Night, I know not by what Miſchance, the Knight was alone, and had fallen into the Hands of ſome Night-walkers, who, I ſuppoſe, would have pillaged him; but I chanced to come by, and reſcued him; though I believe he was heartily frightened, for, as ſoon as ever he was looſe, he ran away, without ſtaying to ſee who had helped him.

Sharp. Is that Bully of his in the Army?

Bellm. No; but is a Pretender, and wears the Habit of a Soldier, which now-a-days as often cloaks Cowardice, as a black Gown does Atheiſm.—You muſt know, he has been abroad—went purely to run away from a Campaign; enriched himſelf with the

Plunder of a few Oaths—and here vents them againſt the General, who, ſlighting Men of Merit, and preferring only thoſe of Intereſt, has made him quit the Service.

Sharp. Wherein, no doubt, he magnifies his own Performance.

Bellm. Speaks Miracles! is the Drum to his own Praiſe—the only Implement of a Soldier he reſembles; like that, being full of bluſtering Noiſe and Emptineſs—

Sharp. And, like that, of no Uſe but to be beaten.

Bellm. Right; but then the Compariſon breaks, for he will take a Drubbing with as little Noiſe as a Pulpit-cuſhion.

Sharp. His Name; and I have done.

Bellm. Why that, to paſs it current too, he has gilded with a Title. He is called, Captain *Bluffe*.

Sharp. Well, I'll endeavour his Acquaintance—you ſteer another Courſe, are bound

For Love's fair Iſle; I for the Golden Coaſt.
May each ſucceed in what he wiſhes moſt!

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II. SCENE I.

Sir JOSEPH WITTOL, SHARPER *following.*

Sharp. SURE that's he, and alone,

Sir *J. Wit.* Um—ay, this is the very damn'd Place; the inhumane Canibals, the bloody-minded Villains, would have butchered me laſt Night: No doubt, they would have flea'd me alive, have ſold my Skin, and devoured, &c.

Sharp. How's this!

Sir *J. Witt.* And it hadn't been for a civil Gentleman as came by and frighted them away—but egad I durſt not ſtay to give him Thanks.

Sharp. This muſt be *Bellmour* he means—ha! I have a Thought—

Sir *J. Witt.* Zooks, would the Captain would come! the very Remembrance makes me quake; egad I ſhall never be reconciled to this Place heartily.

Sharp. 'Tis but trying, and being where I am at worſt. Now luck!—Curs'd Fortune! this muſt be the Place, this damn'd unlucky Place—

Sir *J. Witt.* Egad and ſo 'tis—why here has been more Miſchief done, I perceive.

Sharp. No 'tis gone, it is loſt—ten thouſand Devils on that Chance which drew me hither; ay here, juſt here, this Spot to me is Hell; nothing to be found, but the Deſpair of what I've loſt.

[*Looking about as in Search.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Poor Gentleman!—By the Lord *Harry*, I'll ſtay no longer, for I have found too—

Sharp. Ha! who's that has found? What have you found? reſtore it quickly, or by—

Sir *J. Witt.* Not I, Sir, not I; as I've a Soul to be ſaved, I have found nothing but what has been to my Loſs, as I may ſay, and as you were ſaying, Sir.

Sharp. O your Servant, Sir: you are ſafe then, it ſeems; 'tis an ill Wind that blows nobody good: Well you may rejoice over my ill Fortune, ſince it paied the Price of your Ranſom.

Sir *J. Witt.* I rejoice! egad not I, Sir: I'm very ſorry for your Loſs, with all my Heart, Blood and Guts, Sir: and if you did but know me, you'd ne'er ſay I were ſo ill-natur'd.

Sharp. Know you! why, can you be ſo ungrateful, to forget me!

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord! forget him! No, no, Sir, I don't forget you—becauſe I never ſaw your Face, before, egad. Ha, ha, ha.

Sharp. How! [*Angrily.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Stay, ſtay, Sir, let me recollect—he's a dam'd angry Fellow!—I believe I had better remember him, till I can get out of his Sight; but out o'ſight out o'mind, egad. [*Aſide.*

Sharp. Methought the Service I did you laſt Night, Sir, in preſerving you from thoſe Ruffians, might have taken better Root in your ſhallow Memory.

Sir *J. Witt.* Gad's-Daggers! Belts, Blades, and Scabbards! this is the very Gentleman! How ſhall I make him a Return ſuitable to the Greatneſs of his Merit?—I had a pretty thing to that purpoſe, if he han't frighted it out of my Memory. Hem! hem! Sir, I moſt ſubmiſſively implore your Pardon for my Tranſgreſſion of Ingratitude and Omiſſion; having my intire Dependance, Sir, upon the Superfluity of your Goodneſs, which, like an Inundation, will, I hope, totally immerge the Recollection of my Error, and leave me floating in your Sight, upon the full-blown Bladders of Repentance — by the help of which, I ſhall once more hope to ſwim into your Favour. [*Bows.*

Sharp. So-h, O, Sir, I am eaſily pacified—the Acknowledgment of a Gentleman—

Sir *J. Witt.* Acknowledgment! Sir, I am all over Acknowledgment, and will not ſtick to ſhew it in the greateſt Extremity, by Night or by Day, in Sickneſs or in Health, Winter or Summer, all Seaſons and Occaſions ſhall teſtify the Reality and Gratitude of your ſuperabundant humble Servant, Sir *Joſeph Wittoll* Knight. Hem! hem!

Sharp. Sir *Joſeph Wittoll?*

Sir *J. Witt.* The ſame, Sir, of *Wittoll Hall, in Comitatu Bucks.*

Sharp. Is it poſſible! Then, I am happy, to have obliged the Mirrour of Knighthood and Pink of Courteſy in the Age—let me embrace you.

Sir

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord, Sir!

Sharp. My Loſs I eſteem as a Trifle repaid with Intereſt, ſince it has purchaſed me the Friendſhip and Acquaintance of the Perſon in the World whoſe Character I admire.

Sir *J. Witt.* You are only pleas'd to ſay ſo.—But pray, if I may be ſo bold, what is that Loſs you mention?

Sharp. O term it no longer ſo, Sir. In the Scuffle, laſt Night, I only dropt a Bill of a hundred Pounds, which, I confeſs, I came half deſpairing to recover; but thanks to my better Fortune—

Sir *J. Witt.* You have found it, Sir, then it ſeems; I profeſs I'm heartily glad—

Sharp. Sir, your humble Servant—I don't queſtion but you are; that you have ſo cheap an Opportunity of expreſſing your Gratitude and Generoſity: Since the paying ſo trivial a Sum will wholly acquit you, and doubly engage me.

Sir *J. Witt.* What a dickens does he mean by a trivial Sum? [*Aſide*]—But han't you found it, Sir!

Sharp. No otherwiſe, I vow to Gad, but in my Hopes in you, Sir.

Sir *J. Witt.* Humh.

Sharp. But that's ſufficient—'Twere Injuſtice to doubt the Honour of Sir *Joſeph Wittoll.*

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord, Sir.

Sharp. You are above (I'm ſure) a Thought ſo low, to ſuffer me to loſe what was ventured in your Service; nay 'twas in a manner—paid down for your Deliverance; 'twas ſo much lent you—And you ſcorn, I'll ſay that for you—

Sir *J. Witt.* Nay I'll ſay that for myſelf (with your leave, Sir,) I do ſcorn a dirty thing. But egad I'm a little out of Pocket at preſent.

Sharp. Pſhaw you can't want a hundred Pounds. Your Word is ſufficient any where: 'Tis but borrowing ſo much

much Dirt, you have large Acres, and can ſoon repay it—Money is but Dirt, Sir *Joſiph*—Meer Dirt.

Sir *J. Witt.* But, I profeſs, 'tis a Dirt I have waſhed my Hands of at preſent; I have laid it all out upon my Back.

Sharp. Are you ſo extravagant in Cloaths, Sir *Joſiph*?

Sir *J. Witt.* Ha, ha, ha, a very good Jeſt, I profeſs; ha, ha, ha, a very good Jeſt, and I did not know that I had ſaid it, and that's a better Jeſt than t'other. 'Tis a Sign you and I han't been long acquainted; you have loſt a good Jeſt, for want of knowing me—I only mean a Friend of mine, whom I call my Back; he ſticks as cloſe to me, and follows me through all Dangers—he is indeed Back, Breaſt, and Headpiece as it were to me—egad he's a brave Fellow—Pauh, I am quite another thing, when I am with him: I don't fear the Devil (bleſs us) almoſt if he be by. Ah—had he been with me laſt Night—

Sharp. If he had, Sir, what then? he could have done no more, nor perhaps have ſuffered ſo much—had he a hundred Pounds to loſe? [*Aſide.*

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord, Sir, by no means (but I might have ſaved a hundred Pounds). I meant innocently, as I hope to be ſaved, Sir (a damn'd hot Fellow!) only, as I was ſaying, I let him have all my ready Money, to redeem his great Sword from Limbo.—But, Sir, I have a Letter of Credit to Alderman *Fondlewife*, as far as two hundred Pounds; and this Afternoon you ſhall ſee I am a Perſon, ſuch a one as you would wiſh to have met with—

Sharp. That you are, I'll be ſworn. [*Aſide.* Why that's great, and like yourſelf.

SCENE II.

[*To them*] *Captain* BLUFFE.

Sir *J. Witt.* O here a'comes——Ay, my *Hector of Troy*, welcome my Bully, my Back; egad my Heart has gone apit pat for thee. *Bluffe.*

Bluffe. How now, my young Knight? Not for Fear, I hope? He that knows me muſt be a Stranger to Fear.

Sir *J. Witt.* Nay egad I hate Fear, ever ſince I had like to have died of a Fright—But—

Bluffe. But? Look you here, Boy, here's your Antidote, here's your Jeſuits Powder for a ſhaking Fit—But who haſt thou got with thee? is he of Mettle!

[*Laying his Hand upon his Sword.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay, Bully, a deviliſh ſmart Fellow: 'a will fight like a Cock.

Bluffe. Say you ſo? then I honour him—But has he been abroad? for every Cock will fight upon his own Dunghill.

Sir *J. Witt.* I don't know, but I'll preſent you—

Bluffe. I'll recommend myſelf—Sir, I honour you; I underſtand you love fighting, I reverence a Man that loves fighting; Sir, I kiſs your Hilts.

Sharp. Sir, your Servant: but you are miſinformed; for unleſs it be to ſerve my particular Friend, as Sir *Joſeph* here, my Country, or my Religion, or in ſome very juſtifiable Cauſe, I'm not for it.

Bluffe. O Lord, I beg your Pardon, Sir; I find you are not of my Palate, you can't reliſh a Diſh of fighting without ſweet Sauce. Now I think—

Fighting, for fighting ſake's ſufficient Cauſe;
Fighting, to me,'s Religion and the Laws.

Sir *J. Witt.* Ah well ſaid, my Hero; was not that great, Sir? by the Lord *Harry*, he ſays true; fighting, is Meat, Drink and Cloth to him. But, Back, this Gentleman is one of the beſt Friends I have in the World, and ſaved my Life laſt Night—You know I told you.

Bluffe. Ay! Then I honour him again—Sir, may I crave your Name?

Sharp. Ay, Sir, my Name's *Sharper.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Pray, Mr. *Sharper*, embrace my Back—very well—by the Lord *Harry*, Mr. *Sharper*, he's as brave a Fellow as *Cannibal*, are not you—Bully-Back?

Sharp.

Sharp. *Hannibal* I believe you mean, Sir *Joſeph.*

Bluffe. Undoubtedly he did, Sir; faith, *Hannibal* was a very pretty Fellow—but, Sir *Joſeph*, Compariſons are odious—*Hannibal* was a very pretty Fellow in thoſe Days, it muſt be granted—but alas, Sir! were he alive now, he would be nothing, nothing in the Earth.

Sharp. How, Sir! I make a doubt, if there be at this Day a greater General breathing.

Bluffe. Oh, excuſe me, Sir; have you ſerved abroad, Sir?

Sharp. Not I really, Sir.

Bluffe. Oh, I thought ſo—Why then you can know nothing, Sir: I am afraid you ſcarce know the Hiſtory of the late War in *Flanders*, with all its Particulars.

Sharp. Not I, Sir, no more than publick Letters, or *Gazettes*, tell us.

Bluffe. *Gazettes!* Why there again now—Why, Sir, there are not three Words of Truth, the Year round, put into the *Gazette*—I'll tell you a ſtrange thing now as to that—You muſt know, Sir, I was reſident in *Flanders* the laſt Campaign, had a ſmall Poſt there; but no matter for that—Perhaps, Sir, there was ſcarce any thing of moment done but an humble Servant of yours, that ſhall be nameleſs, was an Eye-witneſs of—I won't ſay had the greateſt Share in't. Tho' I might ſay that too, ſince I name nobody, you know—Well, Mr. *Sharper*, would you think it? In all this time—as I hope for a Truncheon—this raſcally *Gazette*-writer never ſo much as once mentioned me—Not once, by the Wars—Took no more notice, than as if *Nol. Bluffe* had not been in the Land of the Living.

Sharp. Strange!

Sir *J. Witt.* Yet, by the Lord *Harry*, 'tis true, Mr. *Sharper*; for I went every Day to Coffee-houſes, to read the *Gazette* myſelf.

Bluffe. Ay, ay, no matter—You ſee, Mr. *Sharper*, after all, I am content to retire—Live a private Perſon—*Scipio* and others have done it.

Sharp.

Sharp. Impudent Rogue! [*Aſide.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay, this damn'd Modeſty of yours—Egad, if he would put in for't, he might be made General himſelf yet.

Bluffe. Oh fie, no, Sir *Joſeph*—You know I hate this.

Sir *J. Witt.* Let me but tell Mr. *Sharper* a little, how you ate Fire once out of the Mouth of a Cannon—egad he did; thoſe impenetrable Whiſkers of his have confronted Flames—

Bluffe. Death, what do you mean, Sir *Joſeph?*

Sir *J. Witt.* Look you now, I tell you he's ſo modeſt, he'll own nothing.

Bluffe. Piſh, you have put me out, I have forgot what I was about. Pray hold your Tongue, and give me leave. [*Angrily.*

Sir *J. Witt.* I am dumb.

Bluffe. This Sword I think I was telling you of, Mr. *Sharper*—This Sword I'll maintain to be the beſt Divine, Anatomiſt, Lawyer, or Caſuiſt, in *Europe*; it ſhall decide a Controverſy, or ſplit a Cauſe—

Sir *J. Witt.* Nay, now I muſt ſpeak; it will ſplit a Hair, by the Lord *Harry*, I have ſeen it.

Bluffe. Zouns, Sir, it's a Lie, you have not ſeen it, nor ſhan't ſee it; Sir, I ſay you can't ſee; what d'ye ſay to that now?

Sir *J. Witt.* I am blind.

Bluffe. Death, had any other Man interrupted me—

Sir *J. Witt.* Good Mr. *Sharper*, ſpeak to him; I dare not look that way.

Sharp. Captain, Sir *Joſeph* is penitent.

Bluffe. O I am calm, Sir, calm as a diſcharged Culverin—But 'twas indiſcreet, when you know what will provoke me—Nay come, Sir *Joſeph*, you know my Heat's ſoon over.

Sir *J. Witt.* Well, I am a Fool ſometimes—But I'm ſorry.

Bluffe. Enough.

Sir

Sir *J. Witt.* Come, we'll go take a Glaſs, to drown Animoſities; Mr. *Sharper*, will you partake?

Sharp. I wait on you Sir; nay pray, Captain—You are Sir *Joſeph's* Back.

SCENE III.

ARAMINTA, BELINDA, BETTY *waiting, in* ARAMINTA'S *Apartment.*

Bel. Ah! Nay, Dear—prithee good, dear, ſweet Couſin, no more—O Gad! I ſwear you'd make one ſick to hear you.

Aram. Bleſs me! what have I ſaid, to move you thus?

Bel. Oh you have raved, talked idly, and all in Commendation of that filthy, awkard, two-leg'd Creature, Man—you don't know what you've ſaid, your Fever has tranſported you.

Aram. If Love be the Fever which you mean, kind Heaven avert the Cure! Let me have Oil to feed that Flame, and never let it be extinct, till I myſelf am Aſhes.

Bel. There was a Whine!—O Gad! I hate your horrid Fancy—This Love is the Devil, and ſure to be in Love is to be poſſeſs'd—'Tis in the Head, the Heart, the Blood, the—All over—O Gad! you are quite ſpoiled—I ſhall loath the Sight of Mankind for your ſake.

Aram. Fie, this is groſs Affectation—A little of *Bellmour's* Company would change the Scene.

Bel. Filthy Fellow! I wonder, Couſin—

Aram. I wonder, Couſin, you ſhould imagine I don't perceive you love him.

Bel. Oh! I love your hideous Fancy! Ha, ha, ha, love a Man!

Aram. Love a Man! yes, you would not love a Beaſt.

Bel. Of all Beaſts not an Aſs—which is ſo like your *Vainlove*—Lard! I have ſeen an Aſs look ſo chagrin,

grin, ha, ha, ha, (you muſt pardon me, I can't help laughing) that an abſolute Lover would have concluded the poor Creature to have had Darts, and Flames, and Altars, and all that, in his Breaſt. *Araminta*, come, I'll talk ſeriouſly to you now; could you but ſee with my Eyes, the Buffoonry of one Scene of Addreſs, a Lover, ſet out with all his Equipage and Appurtenances; O Gad! ſure you would—But you play the Game, and conſequently can't ſee the Miſcarriages obvious to every Stander-by.

Aram. Yes, yes, I can ſee ſomething near it, when you and *Bellmour* meet. You don't know that you dreamt of *Bellmour* laſt Night, and called him aloud in your Sleep.

Bel. Piſh, I can't help dreaming of the Devil ſometimes; would you from thence infer I love him?

Aram. But that's not all; you caught me in your Arms when you named him, and preſs'd me to your Boſom—Sure, if I had not pinched you till you waked, you had ſtifled me with Kiſſes.

Bel. O barbarous Aſperſion!

Aram. No Aſperſion, Couſin, we are alone—Nay I can tell you more.

Bel. I deny it all.

Aram. What, before you hear it?

Bel. My Denial is premeditated, like your Malice—Lard, Couſin, you talk oddly—Whatever the Matter is, by my Soul, I'm afraid you'll follow evil Courſes.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha, this is pleaſant.

Bel. You may laugh, but—

Aram. Ha, ha, ha.

Bel. You may think the malicious Grin becomes you—The Devil take *Bellmour!*—Why do you tell me of him?

Aram. Oh! is it come out?—now you are angry, I am ſure you love him. I tell nobody elſe, Couſin—I have not betrayed you yet.

Bel. Prithee tell it all the World, it's falſe.

Aram.

Aram. Come then, kiſs, and Friends.

Bel. Piſh.

Aram. Prithee don't be ſo peeviſh.

Bel. Prithee don't be ſo impertinent.—*Betty.*

Aram. Ha, ha, ha.

Betty. Did your Ladyſhip call, Madam?

Bel. Get my Hoods and Tippet, and bid the Footman call a Chair.

Aram. I hope you are not going out in dudgeon, Couſin.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] FOOTMAN.

Footm. Madam, there are—

Bel. Is there a Chair?

Footm. No, Madam, there are Mr. *Bellmour* and Mr. *Vainlove*, to wait upon your Ladyſhip.

Aram. Are they below?

Footm. No, Madam; they ſent before, to know if you were at home.

Bel. The Viſit's to you, Couſin: I ſuppoſe I am at my Liberty.

Aram. Be ready to ſhew them up.

SCENE V.

[*To them*] BETTY, *with Hoods and Looking-glaſs.*

I can't tell, Couſin, I believe we are equally concerned: But if you continue your Humour, it won't be very entertaining—(I know ſhe'd fain be perſuaded to ſtay.) [*Aſide.*

Bel. I ſhall oblige you, in leaving you to the full and free Enjoyment of that Converſation you admire—Let me ſee; hold, I look wretchedly To-day!

Aram. Betty, why don't you help my Couſin? [*Putting on her Hoods.*

Bel. Hold off your Fiſts, and ſee that he gets a Chair with a high Roof, or a very low Seat—Stay, come

come back here, you Mrs. Fidget—you are ſo ready to go to the Footman—Here, take them all again, my Mind's changed, I won't go.

SCENE VI.

ARAMINTA, BELINDA.

Aram. So, this I expected—You won't oblige me then, Couſin, and let me have all the Company to myſelf?

Bel. No, upon Deliberation, I have too much Charity to truſt you to yourſelf. The Devil watches all Opportunities; and in this favourable Diſpoſition of your Mind, Heaven knows how far you may be tempted: I am tender of your Reputation.

Aram. I am obliged to you—But who's malicious now, *Belinda?*

Bel. Not I; witneſs my Heart, I ſtay out of pure Affection.

Aram. In my Conſcience, I believe you.

SCENE VII.

[*To them*] VAINLOVE, BELLMOUR, FOOTMAN.

Bell. So, Fortune be praiſed! To find you both within, Ladies, is—

Aram. No Miracle, I hope.

Bellm. Not on your ſide, Madam, I confeſs—But my Tyrant there and I are two Buckets, that can never come together.

Bel. Nor are ever like—Yet we often meet and claſh.

Bellm. How, never like! marry, *Hymen* forbid. But this it is to run ſo extravagantly in Debt; I have laid out ſuch a World of Love in your Service, that you think you can never be able to pay me all: So ſhun me for the ſame Reaſon that you would a Dun.

Bel. Ay, on my Conſcience, and the moſt impertinent and troubleſome of Duns—a Dun for Money will be quiet, when he ſee his Debtor has not where-

witha

withal—But a Dun for Love is an eternal Torment, that never reſts—

Bellm. Till he has created Love where there was none, and then gets it for his Pains. For Importunity in Love, like Importunity at Court, firſt creates its own Intereſt, and then purſues it for the Favour.

Aram. Favours that are got by Impudence and Importunity are like Diſcoveries from the Rack, when the afflicted Perſon, for his Eaſe, ſometimes confeſſes Secrets his Heart knows nothing of.

Vainl. I ſhould rather think Favours ſo gained to be due Rewards to indefatigable Devotion—For as Love is a Deity, he muſt be ſerved by Prayer.

Bel. O Gad! would you would all pray to Love then, and let us all alone!

Vainl. You are the Temples of Love, and 'tis through you our Devotion muſt be conveyed.

Aram. Rather, poor ſilly Idols of your own making, which upon the leaſt Diſpleaſure you forſake, and ſet up new—Every Man now changes his Miſtreſs and his Religion, as his Humour varies, or his Intereſt.

Vainl. O Madam—

Aram. Nay come, I find we are growing ſerious, and then we are in great Danger of being dull—If my Muſick-maſter is not gone, I'll entertain you with a new Song, which comes pretty near my own Opinion of Love and your Sex—Who's there? Is Mr. *Gavot* gone? [*Calls.*

Footm. Only to the next Door, Madam; I'll call him.

SCENE VIII.

ARAMINTA, BELINDA, VAINLOVE, *and* BELLMOUR.

Bellm. Why, you won't hear me with Patience.

Aram. What's the matter, Couſin?

Bellm. Nothing, Madam, only—

Bel.

Bel. Prithee hold thy Tongue—Lard! he has ſo peſtered me with Flames and Stuff—I think I ſhan't endure the Sight of a Fire this Twelvemonth.

Bellm. Yet all can't melt that cruel frozen Heart.

Bel. O Gad! I hate your hideous Fancy—you ſaid that once before—if you muſt talk impertinently, for Heaven's ſake, let it be with Variety; don't come always, like the Devil, wrapt in Flames—I'll not hear a Sentence more, that begins with an, *I burn*—or an, *I beſeech you, Madam.*

Bellm. But tell me how you would be adored—I am very tractable.

Bel. Then know, I would be adored in Silence.

Bellm. Humph, I thought ſo, that you might have all the Talk to yourſelf—you had better let me ſpeak; for, if my Thoughts fly to any pitch, I ſhall make villainous Signs.

Bel. What will you get by that? to make ſuch Signs as I won't underſtand.

Bellm. Ay, but if I'm Tongue-ty'd, I muſt have all my Actions free to—quicken your Apprehenſion—and egad let me tell you, my moſt prevailing Argument is expreſſed in dumb Shew.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] MUSICK-MASTER.

Aram. O I am glad we ſhall have a Song, to divert the Diſcourſe—Pray oblige us with the laſt new Song.

SONG.

I.

Thus to a ripe, conſenting Maid,
Poor, old, repenting Delia *ſaid,*
Would you long preſerve your Lover?
Would you ſtill his Goddeſs reign?
Never let him all diſcover,
Never let him much obtain.

II.

II.

Men will admire, adore, and die,
While wiſhing at your Feet they lye:
But admitting their Embraces,
Wakes them from the Golden Dream;
Nothing's new beſides our Faces,
Every Woman is the ſame.

Aram. So, how d'ye like the Song, Gentlemen?

Bellm. O very well performed—but I don't much admire the Words.

Aram. I expected it—there's too much Truth in them. If Mr. *Gavot* will walk with us in the Garden, we'll have it once again—you may like it better at ſecond hearing. You'll bring my Couſin.

Bellm. Faith, Madam, I dare not ſpeak to her, but I'll make Signs. [*Addreſſes* Belinda *in dumb Shew.*

Bel. O foh, your dumb Rhetorick is more ridiculous than your talking Impertinence: as an Ape is a much more troubleſome Animal than a Parrot.

Aram. Ay, Couſin, and 'tis a Sign the Creatures mimick Nature well; for there are few Men, but do more ſilly things than they ſay.

Bellm. Well, I find my Apiſhneſs has paid the Ranſom for my Speech, and ſet it at Liberty—tho' I confeſs, I could be well enough pleaſed to drive on a Love Bargain in that ſilent manner—'twould ſave a Man a World of Lying and Swearing at the Year's end. Beſides, I have had a little Experience, that brings to Mind—

When Wit and Reaſon both have fail'd to move;
Kind Looks and Actions (from Succeſs) do prove,
Ev'n Silence may be Eloquent in Love.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

SYLVIA *and* LUCY.

Sylvia. WILL he not come then?

Lucy. Yes, yes, come, I warrant him, if you will go in, and be ready to receive him.

Sylvia. Why did you not tell me?—Whom mean you?

Lucy. Whom you ſhould mean—*Heartwell.*

Sylvia. Senſeleſs Creature! I meant my *Vainlove.*

Lucy. You may as ſoon hope to recover your own Maidenhead, as his Love. Therefore e'en ſet your Heart at reſt, and, in the Name of Opportunity, mind your own Buſineſs. Strike *Heartwell* home, before the Bait's worn off the Hook. Age will come. He nibbled fairly Yeſterday, and no doubt will be eager enough To-day to ſwallow the Temptation.

Sylvia. Well, ſince there's no Remedy—Yet tell me—for I would know, though to the Anguiſh of my Soul; how did he refuſe? Tell me—how did he receive my Letter, in Anger or in Scorn?

Lucy. Neither; but, what was ten times worſe, with damned ſenſeleſs Indifference. By this Light, I could have ſpit in his Face—Receive it! Why he received it, as I would one of your Lovers that ſhould come empty handed; as a Court Lord does his Mercer's Bill, or a begging Dedication:—he received it, as if it had been a Letter from his Wife.

Sylvia. What! did he not read it?

Lucy. Hum'd it over, gave you his Reſpects, and ſaid, he would take Time to peruſe it—but then he was in haſte.

Sylvia. Reſpects! and peruſe it! He's gone, and *Araminta* has bewitched him from me—Oh, how the Name of Rival fires my Blood!—I could curſe them both; eternal Jealouſy attend her Love, and Diſappointment meet his! Oh, that I could revenge the Torment he has cauſed—methinks I feel the Woman ſtrong within me, and Vengeance kindles in the room of Love.

Lucy. I have that in my Head may make Miſchief.

Sylvia. How, dear *Lucy?*

Lucy. You know *Araminta's* diſſembled Coyneſs has won, and keeps him hers—

Sylvia. Could we perſuade him, that ſhe loves another—

Lucy. No, you're out; could we perſuade him, that ſhe doats on him, himſelf—Contrive a kind Letter as from her, it would diſguſt his Nicety, and take away his Stomach.

Sylvia. Impoſſible, 'twill never take.

Lucy. Trouble not your Head. Let me alone—I will inform myſelf of what paſt between them To-day, and about it ſtreight—Hold, I'm miſtaken, or that's *Heartwell*, who ſtands talking at the Corner—'tis he—go, get you in, Madam, receive him pleaſantly, dreſs up your Face in Innocence and Smiles; and diſſemble the very Want of Diſſimulation—You know what will take him.

Sylvia. 'Tis as hard to counterfeit Love, as it is to conceal it: but I'll do my weak Endeavour, though I fear I have not Art.

Lucy. Hang Art, Madam, and truſt to Nature for diſſembling.

Man was by Nature Woman's Cully made:
We never are but by ourſelves betrayed.

SCENE

SCENE II.

HEARTWELL, VAINLOVE, *and* BELLMOUR *following.*

Bellmour. Hiſt, hiſt, is not that *Heartwell* going to *Sylvia?*

Vainlove. He's talking to himſelf, I think; pr'ythee let's try if we can hear him.

Heartwell. Why whither in the Devil's Name am I going now? Hum—let me think—Is not this *Sylvia's* Houſe, the Cave of that Enchantreſs, and which conſequently I ought to ſhun as I would Infection? To enter here, is to put on the envenomed Shirt, to run into the Embraces of a Fever, and, in ſome raving Fit, be led to plunge myſelf into that more conſuming Fire, a Woman's Arms. Ha! well recollected! I will recover my Reaſon, and be gone.

Bellmour. Now *Venus* forbid!

Vainlove. Huſh—

Heartwell. Well, why do you not move? Feet, do your Office!—not one Inch; no, foregad, I'm caught—There ſtands my North, and thither my Needle points—Now could I curſe myſelf, yet cannot repent. O thou delicious, damned, dear, deſtructive Woman! 'Sdeath, how the young Fellows will hoot me! I ſhall be the Jeſt of the Town: Nay, in two Days, I expect to be chronicled in Ditty, and ſung in woeful Ballad, to the Tune of "The ſuperannuated Maiden's Comfort, or the Batchelor's Fall;" and upon the third, I ſhall be hanged in Effigy, paſted up for the exemplary Ornament of Neceſſary-houſes and Coblers-ſtalls—Death, I can't think on't—I'll run into the Danger, to loſe the Apprehenſion.

SCENE III.

BELLMOUR, VAINLOVE.

Bellmour. A very certain Remedy, *probatum eſt*—Ha, ha, ha! poor *George*! thou art i'th' right, thou

haſt ſold thyſelf to Laughter; the ill-natured Town will find the Jeſt juſt where thou haſt loſt it. Ha, ha! how he ſtruggled, like an old Lawyer between two Fees!

Vainlove. Or a young Wench, between Pleaſure and Reputation.

Bellmour. Or as you did To-day, when, half afraid, you ſnatched a Kiſs from *Araminta*.

Vainlove. She has made a Quarrel on't.

Bellmour. Paugh, Women are only angry at ſuch Offences, to have the Pleaſure of forgiving them.

Vainlove. And I love to have the Pleaſure of making my Peace—I ſhould not eſteem a Pardon if too eaſily won.

Bellmour. Thou doſt not know what thou would'ſt be at; whether thou would'ſt have her angry or pleas'd. Could'ſt thou be content to marry *Araminta?*

Vainlove. Could you be content to go to Heav'n?

Bellmour. Hum! not immediately; on my Conſcience, not heartily! I'd do a little more good in my Generation firſt, in order to deſerve it.

Vainlove. Nor I to marry *Araminta* till I merit her.

Bellmour. But how the Devil doſt thou expect to get her if ſhe never yield?

Vainlove. That's true; but I would—

Bellmour. Marry her without her Conſent; thou'rt a Riddle beyond Woman—

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] SETTER.

Truſty *Setter*, what Tidings? How goes the Project?

Setter. As all lewd Projects do, Sir, where the Devil prevents our Endeavours with Succeſs.

Bellmour. A good hearing, *Setter*.

Vainlove. Well, I'll leave you with your Engineer.

Bellmour. And haſt thou provided Neceſſaries?

Setter.

Setter. Ah, all, Sir; the large ſanctified Hat, and the little preciſe Band, with a ſwinging long ſpiritual Cloak, to cover carnal Knavery—not forgetting the black Patch, which *Tribulation Spintext* wears, as I'm informed, upon one Eye, as a penal Mourning for the ogling Offences of his Youth; and ſome ſay, with that Eye, he firſt diſcovered the Frailty of his Wife.

Bellmour. Well, in this fanatic Father's Habit, will I confeſs *Lætitia.*

Setter. Rather prepare her for Confeſſion, Sir, by helping her to Sin.

Bellmour. Be at your Maſter's Lodging in the Evening, I ſhall uſe the Robes.

SCENE V.

SETTER *alone.*

Setter. I ſhall, Sir—I wonder to which of theſe two Gentlemen I do moſt properly appertain—the one uſes me as his Attendant; the other (being the better acquainted with my Parts) employs me as a Pimp; why that's much the more honourable Employment—by all means—I follow one as my Maſter, t'other follows me as his Conductor.

SCENE VI.

[*To him* LUCY.]

Lucy. There's the Hang-dog his Man—I had a Power over him in the Reign of my Miſtreſs; but he is too true a *Valet de Chambre* not to affect his Maſter's Faults; and conſequently is revolted from his Allegiance.

Setter. Undoubtedly 'tis impoſſible to be a Pimp, and not a Man of Parts; that is, without being politic, diligent, ſecret, wary, and ſo forth—And to all this, valiant as *Hercules*—that is, paſſively valiant, and actively obedient—Ah! *Setter*, what a Treaſure is here loſt, for want of being known!

Lucy. Here's ſome Villainy a-foot, he's ſo thoughtful; may be I may diſcover ſomething in my Maſk—Worthy Sir, a Word with you. [*Puts on her Maſk.*

Setter. Why, if I were known, I might come to be a great Man—

Lucy. Not to interrupt your Meditation—

Setter. And I ſhould not not be the firſt that has procured his Greatneſs by Pimping.

Lucy. Now Poverty and the Pox light upon thee, for a contemplative Pimp!

Setter. Ha! what art thou, who thus maliciouſly haſt awakened me from my Dream of Glory? Speak, thou vile Diſturber—

Lucy. Of thy moſt vile Cogitations—thou poor, conceited Wretch, how wert thou valuing thyſelf, upon thy Maſter's Employment! For he's the Head Pimp to Mr. *Bellmour.*

Setter. Good Words, Damſel, or I ſhall—But how doſt thou know my Maſter or me?

Lucy. Yes, I know both Maſter and Man to be—

Setter. To be Men perhaps; nay faith like enough; I often march in the Rear of my Maſter, and enter the Breaches which he has made.

Lucy. Ay, the Breach of Faith, which he has begun, thou Traitor to thy lawful Princeſs!

Setter. Why how now! pr'ythee who art? Lay by that worldly Face, and produce your natural Vizor.

Lucy. No, Sirrah, I'll keep it on to abuſe thee, and leave thee without Hopes of Revenge.

Setter. Oh! I begin to ſmoak you: thou art ſome forſaken *Abigail*, we have dallied with heretofore—and art come to tickle thy Imagination with Remembrance of Iniquity paſt.

Lucy. No, thou pitiful Flatterer of thy Maſter's Imperfections; thou Maukin made up of the Shreds and Parings of his ſuperfluous Fopperies.

Setter. Thou art thy Miſtreſs's foul ſelf, compoſed of her ſullied Iniquities and Cloathing.

Lucy.

Lucy. Hang thee—Beggar's Cur!—Thy Maſter is but a Mumper in Love, lies canting at the Gate; but never dares preſume to enter the Houſe.

Sett. Thou art the Wicket to thy Miſtreſs's Gate, to be opened for all Comers. In fine, thou art the high Road to thy Miſtreſs.

Lucy. Beaſt, filthy Toad! I can hold no longer; look, and tremble. [*Unmaſks.*

Sett. How, Mrs. *Lucy!*

Lucy. I wonder thou haſt the Impudence to look me in the Face.

Sett. Adſbud, who's in fault, Miſtreſs of mine? who flung the firſt Stone? who undervalued my Function? and who the Devil could know you by Inſtinct?

Lucy. You could know my Office by Inſtinct, and be hanged, which you have ſlandered moſt abominably. It vexes me not what you ſaid of my Perſon; but that my innocent Calling ſhould be expoſed and ſcandalized—I cannot bear it.

Sett. Nay, faith, *Lucy*, I'm ſorry; I'll own myſelf to blame, though we were both in Fault as to our Offices.—Come, I'll make you any Reparation.

Lucy. Swear.

Sett. I do ſwear, to the utmoſt of my Power.

Lucy. To be brief then; what is the Reaſon your Maſter did not appear To-day according to the Summons I brought him?

Sett. To anſwer you as briefly—He has a Cauſe to be tried in another Court.

Lucy. Come, tell me in plain Terms, how forward he is with *Araminta.*

Sett. Too forward to be turned back—Though he's a little in Diſgrace at preſent about a Kiſs which he forced. You and I can kiſs, *Lucy*, without all that.

Lucy. Stand off—He's a precious Jewel!

Sett. And therefore you'd have him to ſet in your Lady's Locket.

Lucy. Where is he now?

Sett He'll be in the *Piazza* preſently.

Lucy. Remember To-day's Behaviour—Let me ſee you with a penitent Face.

Sett. What, no Token of Amity, *Lucy?* you and I don't uſe to part with dry Lips.

Lucy. No, no, avaunt—I'll not be ſlabbered and kiſſed now—I'm not i'th' Humour.

Sett. I'll not quit you ſo—I'll follow and put you into the Humour.

SCENE VII.

Sir JOSEPH WITTOL, BLUFFE.

Bluffe. And ſo out of your unwonted Generoſity—

Sir *J. Witt.* And Good-nature, Back; I am good-natured, and I can't help it.

Bluffe. You have given him a Note upon *Fondlewife* for a hundred Pounds.

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay, ay, poor Fellow, he ventured fair for't.

Bluffe. You have diſobliged me in it—for I have occaſion for the Money, and if you would look me in the Face again and live, go, and force him to redeliver you the Note—go—and bring it me hither. I'll ſtay here for you.

Sir *J. Witt.* You may ſtay till the Day of Judgement then, by the Lord *Harry.* I know better things than to be run through the Guts for a hundred Pounds—Why I gave that hundred Pounds for being ſaved, and d'ye think, an there were no Danger, I'll be ſo ungrateful to take it from the Gentleman again?

Bluffe. Well, go to him from me—Tell him, I ſay, he muſt refund—or Bilbo's the Word, and Slaughter will enſue—if he refuſe, tell him—but whiſper that—tell him—I'll pink his Soul—but whiſper that ſoftly to him.

Sir

Sir *J. Witt.* So ſoftly, that he ſhall never hear on't, I warrant you—why, what a Devil's the matter, Bully, are you mad? or d'ye think I'm mad? Egad, for my Part, I don't love to be Meſſenger of ill News; it is an ungrateful Office—ſo tell him yourſelf.

Bluffe. By theſe Hilts, I believe he frightened you into this Compoſition: I believe you gave it him out of Fear, pure paultry Fear—confeſs.

Sir *J. Witt.* No, no, hang't, I was not afraid neither—tho' I confeſs he did in a manner ſnap me up—yet I can't ſay that it was altogether out of Fear, but partly to prevent Miſchief—for he was a deviliſh choleric Fellow: And if my Choler had been up too, egad there would have been Miſchief done, that's flat. And yet, I believe, if you had been by, I would as ſoon have let him had a hundred of my Teeth. Adſheart, if he ſhould come juſt now when I'm angry, I'd tell him—Mum.

SCENE VIII.

[*To them*] BELLMOUR, SHARPER.

Bellm. Thou'rt a lucky Rogue; there's your Benefactor, you ought to return him Thanks, now you have received the Favour.

Sharp. Sir *Joſeph*—your Note was accepted, and the Money paid at Sight: I'm come to return my Thanks—

Sir *J. Witt.* They won't be accepted ſo readily as the Bill, Sir.

Bellm. I doubt the Knight repents, *Tom*—He looks like the Knight of the ſorrowful Face.

Sharp. This is a double Generoſity—Do me a Kindneſs, and refuſe my Thanks—But I hope you are not offended that I offered them.

Sir *J. Witt.* May be I am, Sir, may be I am not, Sir; may be I am both, Sir; what then? I hope I may be offended, without any Offence to you, Sir.

Sharp. Hey-day! Captain, what's the Matter? you can tell.

Bluffe. Mr. *Sharper*, the Matter is plain——Sir *Joſeph* has found out your Trick, and does not care to be put upon; being a Man of Honour.

Sharp. Trick, Sir?

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay Trick, Sir, and won't be put upon, Sir, being a Man of Honour, Sir, and ſo, Sir—

Sharp. Harkee, Sir *Joſeph*, a Word with you—in Conſideration of ſome Favours lately received; I would not have you draw yourſelf into a Premunire, by truſting to that Sign of a Man there—that Pot-gun charged with Wind.

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord, O Lord, Captain, come juſtify yourſelf—I'll give him the Lie, if you'll ſtand to it.

Sharp. Nay then I'll be beforehand with you: take that—Oafe. [*Cuffs him.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Captain, will you ſee this? Won't you pink his Soul?

Bluffe. Huſh't, 'tis not ſo convenient now—I ſhall find a time.

Sharp. What do you mutter about a Time, Raſcal?—You were the Incendiary—There's to put you in Mind of your Time—A Memorandum. [*Kicks him.*

Bluffe. Oh, this is your Time, Sir; you had beſt make uſe on't.

Sharp. Egad, and ſo I will: There's again for you. [*Kicks him.*

Bluffe. You are obliging, Sir, but this is too public a Place to thank you in: But, in your Ear, you are to be ſeen again.

Sharp. Ay, thou inimitable Coward, and to be felt—as for Example. [*Kicks him.*

Bellm. Ha, ha, ha! pr'ythee come away, 'tis ſcandalous to kick this Puppy, unleſs a Man were cold, and had no other Way to get himſelf a Heat.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

Sir JOSEPH WITTOLL, BLUFFE.

Bluffe. Very well—very fine—But 'tis no matter—Is not this fine, Sir *Joſeph?*

Sir *J. Witt.* Indifferent, egad, in my Opinion, very indifferent—I'd rather go plain all my Life, than wear ſuch Finery.

Bluffe. Death and Hell! to be affronted thus! I'll die before I'll ſuffer it. [*Draws.*

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord! his Anger was not raiſed before—nay, dear Captain, don't be in a Paſſion now he's gone—Put up, put up, dear Back, 'tis your Sir *Joſeph* begs; come, let me kiſs thee; ſo, ſo, put up, put up.

Bluffe. By Heaven, 'tis not to be put up.

Sir *J. Witt.* What, Bully?

Bluffe. The Affront.

Sir *J. Witt.* No egad no more it is, for that's put up all already, thy Sword I mean.

Bluffe. Well, Sir *Joſeph*, at your Entreaty—But were not you, my Friend, abuſed, and cufft, and kickt? [*Putting up his Sword.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay, ay, ſo were you too; no matter, 'tis paſt.

Bluffe. By the immortal Thunder of great Guns, 'tis falſe—he ſucks not vital Air, who dares affirm it to this Face. [*Looks big.*

Sir *J. Witt.* To that Face I grant you, Captain—No, no, I grant you—Not to that Face, by the Lord *Harry*—If you had put on your fighting Face before, you had done his Buſineſs—he durſt as ſoon have kiſt you, as kickt you to your Face—But a Man can no more help what's done behind his Back, than what's ſaid—Come, we'll think no more of what's paſt.

Bluffe. I'll call a Council of War within, to conſider of my Revenge to come.

SCENE X. SYLVIA'S *Apartment.*

HEARTWELL, SYLVIA.

SONG.

As Amoret *and* Thyrſis *lay*
Melting the Hours in gentle Play;
Joining Faces, mingling Kiſſes,
And exchanging harmleſs Bliſſes:
He trembling cried, with eager haſte,
O let me feed as well as taſte,
I die, if I'm not wholly bleſt.

After the Song, a Dance of Anticks.

Sylvia. Indeed it is very fine—I could look upon them all Day.

Heart. Well, has this prevailed for me, and will you look upon me?

Sylvia. If you could ſing and dance ſo, I ſhould love to look upon you too.

Heart. Why 'twas I ſung and danced; I gave Muſic to the Voice, and Life to their Meaſures—Look you here, *Sylvia* [*Pulling out a Purſe and chinking it.*] here are Songs and Dances, Poetry and Muſick—hark! how ſweetly one Guinea rhymes to another—and how they dance to the Muſic of their own Chink. This buys all the t'other—and this thou ſhalt have; this, and all that I am worth, for the Purchaſe of thy Love—Say, is it mine then, ha? Speak, Syren—Oons, why do I look on her! Yet I muſt—Speak, dear Angel, Devil, Saint, Witch; do not rack me with Suſpence.

Sylvia. Nay don't ſtare at me ſo—You make me bluſh—I cannot look.

Heart. Oh Manhood, where art thou! What am I come to? A Woman's Toy, at theſe Years! Death, a bearded Baby for a Girl to dandle. O Dotage! Dotage! That ever that noble Paſſion, *Luſt*, ſhould ebb to this degree!—No Reflux of vigorous Blood: But milky Love ſupplies the empty Channels; and prompts me to the Soft-

Softneſs of a Child—a meer Infant, and would ſuck. Can you love me, *Sylvia*? ſpeak.

Sylvia. I dare not ſpeak till I believe you, and indeed I'm afraid to believe you yet.

Heart. Death, how her Innocence torments and pleaſes me! Lying, Child, is indeed the Art of Love; and Men are generally Maſters in it: But I'm ſo newly entered, you cannot diſtruſt me of any Skill in the treacherous Myſtery—Now, by my Soul, I cannot lie, though it were to ſerve a Friend, or gain a Miſtreſs.

Sylvia. Muſt you lie then, if you ſay you love me?

Heart. No, no, dear Ignorance, thou beauteous Changeling—I tell thee I do love thee, and tell it for a Truth, a naked Truth, which I'm aſhamed to diſcover.

Sylvia. But Love, they ſay, is a tender Thing, that will ſmooth Frowns, and make calm an angry Face; will ſoften a rugged Temper, and make ill humoured People good: You look ready to fright one, and talk as if your Paſſion were not Love, but Anger.

Heart. 'Tis both; for I am angry with myſelf when I am pleaſed with you—And a Pox upon me for loving thee ſo well!—yet I muſt on—'Tis a bearded Arrow, and will more eaſily be thruſt forward than drawn back.

Sylvia. Indeed if I were well aſſured you loved; but how can I be well aſſured?

Heart. Take the Symptoms—and aſk all the Tyrants of thy Sex, if their Fools are not known by this Party-coloured Livery—I am melancholic, when thou art abſent: look like an Aſs, when thou art preſent; wake for thee, when I ſhould ſleep; and even dream of thee, when I am awake; ſigh much, drink little, eat leſs, court Solitude, am grown very entertaining to myſelf, and (as I am informed) very troubleſome to every body elſe. If this be not Love, it is Madneſs, and then it is pardonable.—Nay yet a more certain Sign than all this—I give thee my Money.

Sylvia.

Sylvia. Ay, but that is no Sign; for they ſay, Gentlemen will give Money to any naughty Woman to come to Bed to them—O *Gemini*, I hope you don't mean ſo—for I won't be a Whore.

Heart. The more is the Pity! [*Aſide.*

Sylvia. Nay, if you would marry me, you ſhould not come to Bed to me—you have ſuch a Beard, and would ſo prickle one. But do you intend to marry me?

Heart. That a Fool ſhould aſk ſuch a malicious Queſtion! Death, I ſhall be drawn in, before I know where I am—However, I find I am pretty ſure of her Conſent, if I am put to it. [*Aſide.*]—Marry you? no, no, I'll love you.

Sylvia. Nay, but if you love me, you muſt marry me; what don't I know my Father loved my Mother, and was married to her?

Heart. Ay, ay, in old Days, People married where they loved; but that Faſhion is changed, Child.

Sylvia. Never tell me that, I know it is not changed by myſelf; for I love you, and would marry you.

Heart. I'll have my Beard ſhaved, it ſhan't hurt thee, and we'll go to Bed—

Sylvia. No, no, I'm not ſuch a Fool neither, but I can keep myſelf honeſt;—Here, I won't keep any thing that's yours, I hate you now, [*Throws the Purſe*] and I'll never ſee you again, 'cauſe you'd have me be naught. [*Going.*

Heart. Damn her, let her go, and a good riddance—Yet ſo much Tenderneſs and Beauty and Honeſty together is a Jewe—Stay, *Sylvia*—But then to marry—Why every Man plays the Fool once in his Life: But to marry is playing the Fool all one's Life long.

Sylvia. What did you call me for?

Heart. I'll give thee all I have: And thou ſhalt live with me in every thing ſo like my Wife, the World ſhall believe it: Nay, thou ſhalt think ſo thyſelf—Only let me not think ſo. *Sylvia.*

Sylvia. No, I'll die before I'll be your Whore—as well as I love you.

Heart. A Woman, and ignorant, may be honeſt, when 'tis out of Obſtinacy and Contradiction—But, 'ſdeath! it is but a may-be, and upon ſcurvy Terms [*aſide*]—Well, farewel then—if I can get out of Sight, I may get the better of myſelf.

Sylvia. Well—good by. [*Turns, and weeps.*

Heart. Ha! Nay come, we'll kiſs at parting. [*Kiſſes her.*] By Heaven, her Kiſs is ſweeter than Liberty—I will marry thee—there thou haſt done't. All my Reſolves melted in that Kiſs—one more.

Sylvia. But when?

Heart. I'm impatient till it be done; I will not give myſelf Liberty to think, leſt I ſhould cool—I will about a Licence ſtrait—In the Evening expect me—One Kiſs more to confirm me mad; ſo. [*Exit.*

Sylvia. Ha, ha, an old Fox trapt!—

SCENE XI.

[*To her*] LUCY.

Bleſs me! you frighted me, I thought he had been come again, and heard me.

Lucy. Lord, Madam, I met your Lover in as much haſte, as if he had been going for a Midwife.

Sylvia. He's going for a Parſon, Girl, the Forerunner of a Midwife ſome Nine Months hence—Well, I find diſſembling to our Sex is as natural as ſwimming to a *Negro*; we may depend upon our Skill to ſave us at a Plunge, tho' till then we never make the Experiment—But how haſt thou ſucceeded?

Lucy. As you would wiſh—ſince there is no reclaiming *Vainlove*. I have found out a Pique ſhe has taken at him; and have framed a Letter that makes her ſue for Reconciliation firſt. I know that will do—walk in, and I'll ſhew it you. Come, Madam, you're like to have a happy Time on't, both your

Love and Anger ſatisfied!—All that can charm our Sex conſpire to pleaſe you.

That Woman ſure enjoys a bleſſed Night,
Whom Love and Vengeance both at once delight.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

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ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

BELLMOUR *in Fanatic Habit*, SETTER.

Bellm. 'TIS pretty near the Hour. [*Looking on his Watch*] Well and how, *Setter*, ha? does my Hypocriſy fit me, ha? does it ſit eaſy on me?

Sett. O moſt religiouſly well, Sir.

Bellm. I wonder why all our young Fellows ſhould glory in an Opinion of Atheiſm; when they may be ſo much more conveniently lewd under the Coverlet of Religion.

Sett. 'Sbud, Sir, away quickly, there's *Fondlewife* juſt turned the Corner, and's coming this way.

Bellm. Gads ſo, there he is, he muſt not ſee me.

SCENE II.

FONDLEWIFE, BARNABY.

Fond. I ſay, I will tarry at Home.

Barn. But, Sir.

Fond. Good lack! I profeſs the Spirit of Contradiction hath poſſeſt the Lad—I ſay I will tarry at home—*Varlet.*

Barn. I have done, Sir, then farewell 500 Pounds!

Fond.

Fond. Ha, how's that? Stay, ſtay; did you leave Word, ſay you, with his Wife? with *Comfort* herſelf?

Barn. I did; and *Comfort* will ſend *Tribulation* hither as ſoon as ever he comes home—I could have brought young Mr. *Prig*, to have kept my Miſtreſs Company in the mean time: But you ſay—

Fond. How, how, ſay, *Varlet!* I ſay, let him not come near my Doors. I ſay, he is a wanton young *Levite*, and pampereth himſelf up with Dainties, that he may look lovely in the Eyes of Women—Sincerely I am afraid he hath already defiled the Tabernacle of our Siſter *Comfort*; while her good Huſband is deluded by his godly Appearance—I ſay, that even Luſt doth ſparkle in his Eyes, and glow upon his Cheeks, and that I would as ſoon truſt my Wife with a Lord's high-fed Chaplain.

Barn. Sir, the Hour draws nigh—and nothing will be done there till you come.

Fond. And nothing can be done here till I go—So that I'll tarry, d'ye ſee.

Barn. And run the Hazard to loſe your Affair, Sir!

Fond. Good lack, good lack!—I profeſs it is a very ſufficient Vexation, for a Man to have a handſome Wife.

Barn. Never, Sir, but when the Man is an inſufficient Huſband. 'Tis then indeed like the Vanity of taking a fine Houſe, and yet be forced to let Lodgings, to help pay the Rent.

Fond. I profeſs, a very apt Compariſon, *Varlet.* Go and bid my Cocky come out to me. I will give her ſome Inſtructions, I will reaſon with her before I go.

SCENE III.

FONDLEWIFE *alone.*

And in the mean time, I will reaſon with myſelf—Tell me, *Iſaac*, why art thee jealous? Why art thee diſtruſtful

diſtruſtful of the Wife of thy Boſom?—Becauſe ſhe is young and vigorous, and I am old and impotent—Then why didſt thee marry, *Iſaac?*—Becauſe ſhe was beautiful and tempting, and becauſe I was obſtinate and doating; ſo that my Inclination was (and is ſtill) greater than my Power—And will not that which tempted thee, alſo tempt others, who will tempt her, *Iſaac?*—I fear it much—But does not thy Wife love thee, nay doat upon thee?—Yes—Why then!—Ay, but to ſay truth, ſhe's fonder of me, than ſhe has reaſon to be; and in the way of Trade, we ſtill ſuſpect the ſmootheſt Dealers of the deepeſt Deſigns—And that ſhe has ſome Deſigns deeper than thou canſt reach, thou haſt experimented, *Iſaac*—But mum.

SCENE IV.

FONDLEWIFE, LÆTITIA.

Læt. I hope my deareſt Jewel is not going to leave me—are you, *Nykin?*

Fond. Wife—Have you thoroughly conſidered how deteſtable, how heinous, and how crying a Sin, the Sin of Adultery is? have you weighed it, I ſay? For it is a very weighty Sin; and although it may lie heavy upon thee, yet thy Huſband muſt alſo bear his Part: For thy Iniquity will fall upon his Head.

Læt. Bleſs me, what means my Dear?

Fond. I profeſs ſhe has an alluring Eye; I am doubtful, whether I ſhall truſt her, even with *Tribulation* himſelf! [*Aſide.*]—Speak, I ſay, have you conſidered, what it is to cuckold your Huſband?

Læt. I'm amazed: Sure he has diſcovered nothing! [*Aſide.*]—Who has wronged me to my Deareſt? I hope my Jewel does not think, that ever I had any ſuch thing in my Head, or ever will have.

Fond. No, no, I tell you I ſhall have it in my Head—

Læt.

Læt. I know not what to think. But I'm reſolved to find the Meaning of it. [*Aſide.*]—Unkind Dear! Was it for this you ſent to call me? is it not Affliction enough that you are to leave me, but you muſt ſtudy to increaſe it by unjuſt Suſpicions? [*Crying.*] Well—Well—you know my Fondneſs, and you love to tyrannize—Go on, cruel Man, do, triumph over my poor Heart, while it holds; which cannot be long, with this Uſage of yours—But that's what you want—Well, you will have your Ends ſoon—You will—You will—Yes, it will break, to oblige you. [*Sighs.*

Fond. Verily, I fear I have carried the Jeſt too far—Nay, look you now if ſhe does not weep—'tis the fondeſt Fool—Nay, Cocky, Cocky, nay, dear Cocky, don't cry, I was but in Jeſt, I was not, ifeck.

Læt. Oh then all's ſafe. I was terribly frighted! [*Aſide.*]—My Affliction is always your Jeſt, barbarous Man! Oh that I ſhould love to this Degree! yet—

Fond. Nay, Cocky.

Læt. No, no, you are weary of me, that's it—that's all, you would get another Wife—another fond Fool, to break her Heart—well, be as cruel as you can to me, I'll pray for you; and when I am dead with Grief, may you have one that will love you as well as I have done! I ſhall be contented to lay at Peace in my cold Grave—ſince it will pleaſe you. [*Sighs.*

Fond. Good lack, good lack! ſhe would melt a Heart of Oak—I profeſs I can hold no longer—Nay, dear Cocky—Ifeck you'll break my Heart—Ifeck you will—See you have made me weep—made poor *Nykin* weep—Nay come kiſs, buſs poor *Nykin*—and I won't leave thee—I'll loſe all firſt.

Læt. How! Heaven forbid! that will be carrying the Jeſt too far indeed. [*Aſide.*

Fond. Won't you kiſs *Nykin?*

Læt. Go, naughty *Nykin*, you don't love me.

Fond. Kiſs, kiſs, ifeck I do.

Læt. No you don't. [*She kiſſes him.*

Fond.

Fond. What not love Cocky!

Læt. No—h. [*Sighs.*

Fond. I profeſs, I do love thee better than 500 Pounds—and ſo thou ſhalt ſay, for I'll leave it to ſtay with thee.

Læt. No you ſhan't neglect your Buſineſs for me—No indeed you ſhan't, *Nykin*—If you don't go, I'll think you been jealous of me ſtill.

Fond. He, he, he! wilt thou, poor Fool? Then I will go, I won't be jealous—Poor Cocky, kiſs *Nykin*, kiſs *Nykin*, ee, ee, ee!—Here will be the good Man anon, to talk to Cocky, and teach her how a Wife ought to behave herſelf.

Læt. I hope to have one that will ſhew me how a Huſband ought to behave himſelf [*Aſide.*]—I ſhall be glad to learn, to pleaſe my Jewel. [*Kiſs.*

Fond. That's my good Dear—Come kiſs *Nykin* once more, and then get you in—So—Get you in, get you in. By by.

Læt. By, *Nykin.*

Fond. By, Cocky.

Læt. By, *Nykin.*

Fond. By, Cocky, by, by.

SCENE V.

VAINLOVE, SHARPER.

Sharp. How! *Araminta* loſt!

Vainl. To confirm what I have ſaid, read this— [*Gives a Letter.*

Sharper, Reads] *Hum, hum—And what then appeared a Fault, upon Reflection ſeems only an Effect of a too powerful Paſſion. I'm afraid I give too great a Proof of my own at this Time—I am in Diſorder for what I have written. But ſomething, I know not what, forced me. I only beg a favourable Cenſure of this, and your*

Araminta.

Sharp.

Sharp. Loſt! Pray Heaven thou haſt not loſt thy Wits. Here, here, ſhe's thy own, Man, ſigned and ſealed too—To her, Man—a delicious Melon, pure and conſenting ripe, and only waits thy cutting up—She has been breeding Love to thee all this while, and juſt now ſhe's delivered of it.

Vainl. 'Tis an untimely Fruit, and ſhe has miſcarried of her Love.

Sharp. Never leave this damned, ill-natured Whimſey, *Frank?* Thou haſt a ſickly peeviſh Appetite; only chew Love, and cannot digeſt it.

Vainl. Yes, when I feed myſelf—But I hate to be crammed—By Heaven, there's not a Woman will give a Man the Pleaſure of a Chace: My Sport is always balkt or cut ſhort—I ſtumble over the Game I would purſue—'Tis dull and unnatural to have a Hare run full in the Hound's Mouth; and would diſtaſte the keeneſt Hunter—I would have overtaken, not have met my Game.

Sharp. However, I hope you don't mean to forſake it; that will be but a kind of a Mungril Cur's Trick. Well, are you for the Mall?

Vainl. No, ſhe will be there this Evening—Yes, I will go too—and ſhe ſhall ſee her Error in—

Sharp. In her Choice egad—But thou canſt not be ſo great a Brute as to ſlight her.

Vainl. I ſhould diſappoint her if I did not—By her Management I ſhould think ſhe expects it.

All naturally fly what does purſue:
'Tis fit Men ſhould be coy, when Women woe.

SCENE VI.

A Room in FONDLEWIFE'S *Houſe.*

A SERVANT *introducing* BELLMOUR *in Fanatic Habit, with a Patch upon one Eye, and a Book in his Hand.*

Ser. Here's a Chair, Sir, if you pleaſe to repoſe yourſelf. My Miſtreſs is coming, Sir.

Bellm.

Bellm. Secure in my Diſguiſe, I have out-faced Suſpicion, and even dared Diſcovery—This Cloak my Sanctity, and truſty *Scarron's* Novels my Prayer-book—Methinks I am the very Picture of *Montufar* in the *Hypocrites*—Oh! ſhe comes.

SCENE VII.

BELLMOUR, LÆTITIA.

So breaks Aurora *through the Veil of Night,*
Thus fly the Clouds, divided by her Light,
And ev'ry Eye receives a new-born Sight.
[*Throwing off his Cloak, Patch,* &c.

Læt. Thus ſtrew'd with Bluſhes, like—Ah! Heaven defend me! Who's this? [*Diſcovering him, ſtarts.*

Bellm. Your Lover.

Læt. Vainlove's Friend! I know his Face, and he has betrayed me to him. [*Aſide.*

Bellm. You're ſurprized. Did you not expect a Lover, Madam? thoſe Eyes ſhone kindly on my firſt Appearance, tho' now they are o'er-caſt.

Læt. I may well be ſurprized at your Perſon and Impudence; they are both new to me—You are not what your firſt Appearance promiſed: The Piety of your Habit was welcome, but not the Hypocriſy.

Bellm. Rather the Hypycriſy was welcome, but not the Hypocrite.

Læt. Who are you, Sir? You have miſtaken the Houſe ſure.

Bellm. I have Directions in my Pocket, which agree with every thing but your Unkindneſs.
[*Pulls out the Letter.*

Læt. My Letter! Baſe *Vainlove!* Then 'tis too late to diſſemble. [*Aſide.*]—'Tis plain then you have miſtaken the Perſon. [*Going.*

Bellm. If we part ſo, I'm miſtaken—Hold, hold, Madam—I confeſs I have run into an Error—I beg your Pardon a thouſand times—What an eternal Blockhead

Blockhead am I! Can you forgive me the Diſorder I have put you into?—But it is a Miſtake which any body might have made.

Læt. What can this mean! 'Tis impoſſible he ſhould be miſtaken after all this—A handſome Fellow, if he had not ſurprized me: Methinks, now I look on him again, I would not have him miſtaken. [*Aſide.*] We are all liable to Miſtakes, Sir: If you own it to be ſo, there needs no farther Apology.

Bellm. Nay Faith, Madam, 'tis a pleaſant one; and worth your hearing. Expecting a Friend, laſt Night, at his Lodgings, till 'twas late; my Intimacy with him gave me the Freedom of his Bed: He not coming home all Night, a Letter was delivered to me by a Servant, in the Morning: Upon the Peruſal, I found the Contents ſo charming, that I could think of nothing all Day, but putting them in Practice—till juſt now (the firſt Time I ever looked upon the Superſcription) I am the moſt ſurprized in the World to find it directed to Mr. *Vainlove*. Gad, Madam, I aſk you a Million of Pardons, and will make you any Satisfaction.

Læt. I am diſcovered—And either *Vainlove* is not guilty, or he has handſomely excuſed him. [*Aſide.*

Bellm. You appear concerned, Madam.

Læt. I hope you are a Gentleman;—and, ſince you are privy to a weak Woman's Failing, won't turn it to the Prejudice of her Reputation. You look as if you had more Honour—

Bellm. And more Love; or my Face is a falſe Witneſs, and deſerves to be pilloried.—No, by Heaven, I ſwear—

Læt. Nay, don't ſwear, if you'd have me believe you; but promiſe—

Bellm. Well, I promiſe—A Promiſe is ſo cold—Give me leave to ſwear—by thoſe Eyes; thoſe killing Eyes; by thoſe healing Lips.—Oh! preſs the ſoft Charm cloſe to mine,—and ſeal them up for ever.

Læt.

Læt. Upon that Condition. [*He kiſſes her.*

Bellm. Eternity was in that Moment—One more, upon any Condition.

Læt. Nay now—I never ſaw any thing ſo agreeably impudent. [*Aſide.*] Won't you cenſure me for this, now?—but 'tis to buy your Silence. [*Kiſs.*] Oh, but what am I doing!

Bellm. Doing! No Tongue can expreſs it—not thy own; nor any thing, but thy Lips. I am faint with Exceſs of Bliſs: Oh, for Love-ſake, lead me any whither, where I may lye down;—quickly, for I'm afraid I ſhall have a Fit.

Læt. Bleſs me! What Fit?

Bellm. Oh, a Convulſion—I feel the Symptoms.

Læt. Does it hold you long? I'm afraid to carry you into my Chamber.

Bellm. Oh, no, let me lay down upon the Bed;—the Fit will be ſoon over.

SCENE VIII. *St.* James's Park.

ARAMINTA *and* BELINDA *meeting.*

Belin. Lard, my Dear: I am glad I have met you—I have been at the *Exchange* ſince, and am ſo tired—

Aram. Why, what's the Matter?

Belin. Oh the moſt inhumane, barbarous Hackney-Coach! I am jolted to a Jelly—Am I not horridly touzed? [*Pulls out a Pocket-glaſs.*

Aram. Your Head's a little out of order.

Belin. A little! O frightful! What a furious Phyz I have! O moſt rueful! Ha, ha, ha! O Gad, I hope nobody will come this Way, till I have put myſelf a little in Repair—Ah! my Dear—I have ſeen ſuch unhewn Creatures ſince—Ha, ha, ha! I can't for my Soul help thinking that I look juſt like one of them—Good Dear, pin this, and I'll tell you—Very well—So, thank you, my Dear—But as I was telling you—Piſh, this is the moſt untowardſt Lock—So, as I was telling

telling you—How d'ye like me now? Hideous, ha? Frightful ſtill? Or how?

Aram. No, no; you're very well as can be.

Belin. And ſo—But where did I leave off, my Dear? I was telling you—

Aram. You were about to tell me ſomething, Child—but you left off before you began.

Belin. Oh; a moſt comical Sight: A Country Squire, with the Equipage of a Wife and two Daughters, came to Mrs. *Snipwell's* Shop while I was there—But, oh Gad! Two ſuch unlicked Cubs!

Aram. I warrant, plump, cherry-cheeked Country Girls.

Belin. Ay, on my Conſcience, fat as Barn-door Fowl: But ſo bedecked, you would have taken them for *Friezland* Hens, with their Feathers growing the wrong Way—O ſuch outlandiſh Creatures! Such *Tramontanæ*, and Foreigners to the Faſhion, or any thing in Practice! I had not Patience to behold—I undertook the modeling of one of their Fronts, the more modern Structure—

Aram. Bleſs me, Couſin: why would you affront any body ſo? They might be Gentlewomen of a very good Family.

Belin. Of a very ancient one, I dare ſwear, by their Dreſs—Affront! Pſhaw, how you're miſtaken! The poor Creature, I warrant, was as full of Curt'ſies, as if I had been her Godmother: The Truth on't is, I did endeavour to make her look like a Chriſtian—and ſhe was ſenſible of it; for ſhe thanked me, and gave me two Apples, piping hot, out of her Under-Petticoat Pocket—Ha, ha, ha! And t'other did ſo ſtare and gape—I fancied her like the Front of her Father's Hall; her Eyes were the two Jut Windows, and her Mouth the great Door, moſt hoſpitably kept open, for the Entertainment of traveling Flies.

Aram. So then; you have been diverted. What did they buy?

Maſk, that a Coward has while the Sword is in the Scabbard—So were forced to draw in our own Defence.

Bluffe. My Blood riſes at that Fellow: I can't ſtay where he is; and I muſt not draw in the Park.

[*To Sir* Joſeph.

Sir *J. Witt.* I wiſh I durſt ſtay to let her know my Lodging!

SCENE XI.

ARAMINTA, BELINDA, VAINLOVE, SHARPER.

Sharper. There is in true Beauty, as in Courage, ſomewhat which narrow Souls cannot dare to admire—And ſee, the Owls are fled, as at the Break of Day.

Belin. Very courtly!—I believe, Mr. *Vainlove* has not rubbed his Eyes ſince Break of Day neither; he looks as if he durſt not approach—Nay, come, Couſin, be Friends with him—I ſwear he looks ſo very ſimply, ha, ha, ha!—Well, a Lover, in the State of Separation from his Miſtreſs, is like a Body without a Soul. Mr. *Vainlove*, ſhall I be bound for your good Behaviour for the future?

Vainl. Now muſt I pretend Ignorance equal to hers, of what ſhe knows as well as I. [*Aſide.*]—Men are apt to offend ('tis true) where they find moſt Goodneſs to forgive—But, Madam, I hope I ſhall prove of a Temper, not to abuſe Mercy, by committing new Offences.

Aram. So cold! [*Aſide.*

Belin. I have broke the Ice for you, Mr. *Vainlove*, and ſo I leave you. Come, Mr. *Sharper*, you and I will take a Turn, and laugh at the Vulgar—both the great Vulgar and the ſmall—Oh Gad! I have a great Paſſion for *Cowley*—Don't you admire him?

Sharper. Oh, Madam! He was our *Engliſh Horace.*

Belin. Ah ſo fine! ſo extremely fine! ſo every thing in the World that I like—Oh Lord! walk this Way—I ſee a Couple, I'll give you their Hiſtory.

SCENE

SCENE XII.

ARAMINTA, VAINLOVE.

Vainl. I find, Madam, the Formality of the Law muſt be obſerved, tho' the Penalty of it be diſpenſed with; and an Offender muſt plead to his Arraignment, though he has his Pardon in his Pocket.

Aram. I'm amazed! This Inſolence exceeds t'other;—whoever has encouraged you to this Aſſurance—preſuming upon the Eaſineſs of my Temper, has much deceived you, and ſo you ſhall find.

Vainl. Hey-day! Which Way now? Here's fine doubling! [*Aſide.*

Aram. Baſe Man! Was it not enough to affront me with your ſawcy Paſſion?

Vainl. You have given that Paſſion a much kinder Epithet than ſawcy, in another Place.

Aram. Another Place! Some villainous Deſign to blaſt my Honour—But, tho' thou hadſt all the Treachery and Malice of thy Sex, thou canſt not lay a Blemiſh on my Fame—No, I have not erred in one favourable Thought of Mankind—How Time might have deceived me in you, I know not; my Opinion was but young, and your early Baſeneſs has prevented its growing to a wrong Belief—Unworthy, and ungrateful! Be gone, and never ſee me more.

Vainl. Did I dream? or do I dream? Shall I believe my Eyes, or Ears? The Viſion is here ſtill—Your Paſſion, Madam, will admit of farther Reaſoning—But here's a ſilent Witneſs of your Acquaintance.

[*Takes out the Letter, and offers it. She ſnatches it, and throws it away.*

Aram. There's Poiſon in every thing you touch—Bliſters will follow—

Vainl. That Tongue, which denies what the Hands have done—

Aram. Still myſtically ſenſeleſs, and impudent!—I find I muſt leave the Place.

Vainl. No, Madam, I'm gone—She knows her Name's to it, which ſhe will be unwilling to expoſe to the Cenſure of the firſt Finder.

Aram. Woman's Obſtinacy made me blind to what Woman's Curioſity now tempts me to ſee.

[*Takes up the Letter.*

SCENE XIII.

BELINDA, SHARPER.

Belin. Nay, we have ſpared no body, I ſwear. Mr. *Sharper*, you're a pure Man; where did you get this excellent Talent of Railing?

Sharper. Faith, Madam, the Talent was born with me:—I confeſs, I have taken Care to improve it; to qualify me for the Society of Ladies.

Belin. Nay, ſure, Railing is the beſt Qualification in a Woman's Man.

SCENE XIV.

[*To them*] FOOTMAN.

Sharper. The ſecond beſt—indeed I think.

Belin. How now, *Pace?* where's my Couſin?

Foot. She's not very well, Madam, and has ſent to know if your Ladyſhip would have the Coach come again for you?

Belin. O Lord, no, I'll go along with her. Come, Mr. *Sharper.*

SCENE XV.

A Chamber in FONDLEWIFE's *Houſe.*

LÆTITIA *and* BELLMOUR, *his Cloak, Hat, &c. lying looſe about the Chamber.*

Bellm. Here's nobody, nor no Noiſe—'twas nothing but your Fears.

Læt.

Læt. I durſt have ſworn, I had heard my Monſter's Voice—I ſwear, I was heartily frightened—Feel how my Heart beats.

Bellm. 'Tis an Alarm to Love—Come in again, and let us—

Fondlewife without. Cocky, Cocky, where are you Cocky? I'm come home.

Læt. Ah! There he is. Make haſte, gather up your Things.

Fond. Cocky, Cocky, open the Door.

Bellm. Pox choak him! would his Horns were in his Throat! My Patch, my Patch.

[*Looking about, and gathering up his Things.*

Læt. My Jewel, art thou there? No matter for your Patch!—You s'an't tum in, *Nykin*—Run into my Chamber, quickly, quickly. You s'an't tum in.

Fond. Nay, pr'ythee, Dear, i'feck I'm in haſte.

Læt. Then I'll let you in. [*Opens the Door.*

SCENE XVI.

LÆTITIA, FONDLEWIFE, *Sir* JOSEPH WITTOL.

Fond. Kiſs, Dear—I met the Maſter of the Ship by the Way—And I muſt have my Papers of Accompts out of your Cabinet.

Læt. Oh, I'm undone! [*Aſide.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Pray, firſt let me have 50 Pounds, good Alderman, for I'm in haſte.

Fond. A hundred has already been paid, by your Order. Fifty? I have the Sum ready in Gold, in my Cloſet.

SCENE XVII.

LÆTITIA, *Sir* JOSEPH WITTOL.

Sir *J. Witt.* Egad, it's a curious, fine, pretty Rogue; I'll ſpeak to her.—Pray, Madam, what News d'ye hear?

Læt. Sir, I ſeldom ſtir abroad.

[*Walks about in Diſorder.*

Sir *J. Witt.* I wonder at that, Madam, for 'tis moſt curious fine Weather.

Læt. Methinks it has been very ill Weather.

Sir *J. Witt.* As you ſay, Madam, 'tis pretty bad Weather, and has been ſo a great while.

SCENE XVIII.

[*To them*] FONDLEWIFE.

Fond. Here are fifty Pieces in this Purſe, Sir *Joſeph*—If you will tarry a Moment, till I fetch my Papers, I'll wait upon you down Stairs.

Læt. Ruined, paſt Redemption! What ſhall I do—Ha! this Fool may be of uſe. (*Aſide.*)—[*As* Fondlewife *is going into the Chamber, ſhe runs to Sir* Joſeph, *almoſt puſhes him down, and cries out,*] Stand off, rude Ruffian! Help me, my Dear—O bleſs me! Why will you leave me alone with ſuch a Satyr?

Fond. Bleſs us! What's the Matter? What's the Matter?

Læt. Your Back was no ſooner turned; but, like a Lion, he came open-mouthed upon me, and would have raviſhed a Kiſs from me by main Force.

Sir *J. Witt.* O Lord! Oh terrible! Ha, ha, ha! is your Wife mad, Alderman?

Læt. Oh! I'm ſick with the Fright; won't you take him out out of my Sight?

Fond. Oh Traitor! I'm aſtoniſhed. Oh bloody-minded Traitor!

Sir *J. Witt.* Hey-day! Traitor yourſelf!—By the Lord *Harry*, I was in moſt Danger of being raviſhed, if you go to that.

Fond. Oh, how the blaſphemous Wretch ſwears! Out of my Houſe, thou Son of the Whore of *Babylon*; Off-ſpring of *Bell* and the *Dragon!*—Bleſs us! Raviſh my

my Wife! my *Dinah!* Oh *Shechemite!* Be gone, I ſay.

Sir *J. Witt.* Why, the Devil's in the People, I think.

SCENE XIX.

LÆTITIA, FONDLEWIFE.

Læt. Oh! won't you follow, and ſee him out of Doors, my Dear?

Fond. Ill ſhut this Door, to ſecure him from coming back—Give me the Key of your Cabinet, Cocky—Raviſh my Wife before my Face! I warrant he's a Papiſt in his Heart, at leaſt, if not a *Frenchman.*

Læt. What can I do now! [*Aſide.*]—Oh! my Dear, I have been in ſuch a Fright, that I forgot to tell you, poor Mr. *Spintext* has a ſad Fit of the Colic, and is forced to lye down upon our Bed—You'll diſturb him; I can tread ſoftlier.

Fond. Alack, poor Man!—no, no—you don't know the Papers—I won't diſturb him; give me the Key.

[*She gives him the Key, goes to the Chamber Door, and ſpeaks aloud.*

Læt. 'Tis nobody but Mr. *Fondlewife,* Mr. *Spintext,* lye ſtill on your Stomach; lying on your Stomach will eaſe you of the Colic.

Fond. Ay, ay, lye ſtill, lye ſtill; don't let me diſturb you.

SCENE XX.

LÆTITIA, *alone.*

Læt. Sure, when he does not ſee his Face, he won't diſcover him! Dear Fortune, help me but this once, and I'll never run into thy Debt again—But this Opportunity is the Devil.

SCENE XXI.

FONDLEWIFE *returns, with Papers.*

Fond. Good lack! good lack!—I profeſs, the poor Man is in great Torment, he lyes as flat—Dear, you ſhould heat a Trencher, or a Napkin—Where's *Deborah?* Let her clap ſome warm Thing to his Stomach, or chafe it with a warm Hand, rather than fail. What Book's this?

[*Sees the Book that* Bellmour *forgot.*

Læt. Mr. *Spintext's* Prayer-book, Dear.——Pray Heaven it be a Prayer-book! [*Aſide.*

Fond. Good Man! I warrant he dropped it on purpoſe that you might take it up, and read ſome of the pious Ejaculations! [*Taking up the Book.*] O bleſs me! O monſtrous! A Praye-book? Ay, this is the Devil's *Pater-Noſter.* Hold, let me ſee; *The Innocent Adultery.*

Læt. Misfortune! now all's ruined again. [*Aſide.*

Bellmour peeping. Damn'd Chance! If I had gone a Whoring with the *Practice of Piety* in my Pocket, I'd had never been diſcovered.

Fond. Adultery, and innocent! O Lord! Here's Doctrine! Ay, here's Diſcipline!

Læt. Dear Husband, I'm amazed:—Sure it is a good Book, and only tends to the Speculation of Sin.

Fond. Speculation! No, no; ſomething went farther than Speculation when I was not to be let in—Where is this Apocryphal Elder! I'll ferret him.

Læt. I'm ſo diſtracted, I can't think of a Lie. [*Aſide.*

SCENE XXII.

LÆTITIA, *and* FONDLEWIFE *haling out* BELLMOUR.

Fond. Come out here, thou *Ananias* incarnate—Who, how now! Who have we here?

Læt. Ha! [*Shrieks, as ſurprized.*

Fond.

Fond. Oh, thou ſalacious Woman! Am I then brutified? Ay, I feel it here; I ſprout, I bud, I bloſſom, I am ripe-horn-mad. But who in the Devil's Name are you? Mercy on me for ſwearing! But—

Læt. Oh, Goodneſs keep us! Who's this? Who are you? What are you?

Bellm. Soh.

Læt. In the Name of the—O! Good, my Dear, don't come near it, I'm afraid 'tis the Devil; indeed it has Hoofs, Dear.

Fond. Indeed, and I have Horns, Dear. The Devil! no, I am afraid, 'tis the Fleſh, thou Harlot. Dear, with the Pox. Come, *Syren*, ſpeak, confeſs, who is this reverend, brawny Paſtor?

Læt. Indeed, and indeed now, my dear *Nykin*—I never ſaw this wicked Man before.

Fond. Oh, it is a Man then, it ſeems.

Læt. Rather, ſure, it is a Wolf in the Cloathing of a Sheep.

Fond. Thou art a Devil, in his proper Cloathing, Woman's Fleſh. What, you know nothing of him, but his Fleece here!—You don't love Mutton?—you *Magdalen* unconverted!

Bellm. Well, now, I know my Cue—That is, very honourably to excuſe her, and very impudently accuſe myſelf. [*Aſide.*

Læt. Why then, I wiſh I may never enter into the Heaven of your Embraces again, my Dear, if ever I ſaw his Face before.

Fond. O Lord! O ſtrange! I am in Admiration of your Impudence. Look at him a little better; he is more modeſt, I warrant you, than to deny it. Come, were you two never Face to Face before? Speak.

Bellm. Since all Artifice is vain—and I think myſelf obliged to ſpeak the Truth, in Juſtice to your Wife—No.

Fond. Humph.

Lær. No, indeed, Dear.

Fond. Nay I find you are both in a Story; that I muſt confeſs. But, what—not to be cured of the Colic? Don't you know your Patient, Mrs. *Quack?* Oh, lye upon your Stomach, lying upon your Stomach will cure you of the Colic. Ah! Anſwer me, *Iſrahel?*

Lær. Let the wicked Man anſwer for himſelf; does he think that I have nothing to do but excuſe him? it is enough, if I can clear my own Innocence to my own Dear.

Bellm. By my troth, and ſo it is—I have been a little too backward, that is the Truth on it.

Fond. Come, Sir, who are you, in the firſt Place? And what are you?

Bellm. A Whore-maſter.

Fond. Very conciſe.

Lær. O beaſtly, impudent Creature!

Fond. Well, Sir, and what came you hither for?

Bellm. To lye with your Wife.

Fond. Good again!—A very civil Perſon this, and I believe ſpeaks Truth.

Lær. Oh, inſupportable Impudence!

Fond. Well, Sir—Pray be covered—and you have—Heh! You have finiſhed the Matter, heh? And I am, as I ſhould be, a ſort of a civil Perquiſite to a Whore-maſter, called a *Cuckold*, heh? Is it not ſo? Come, I'm inclining to believe every Word you ſay.

Bellm. Why, Faith, I muſt confeſs, ſo I deſigned you—But, you were a little unlucky in coming ſo ſoon, and hindered the making of your own Fortune.

Fond. Humph. Nay, if you mince the Matter once, and go back of your Word; you are not the Perſon I took you for. Come, come, go on boldly—What! don't be aſhamed of your Profeſſion—Confeſs, confeſs; I ſhall love thee the better for't—I ſhall, i'feck—What! doſt think I don't know how to behave myſelf in the Employment of a Cuckold, and have been three Years Ap-

Apprentice to Matrimony? Come, come; Plain-dealing is a Jewel.

Bellm. Well; ſince I ſee thou art a good honeſt Fellow, I'll confeſs the whole Matter to thee.

Fond. Oh, I'm a very honeſt Fellow—You never lay with an honeſter Man's Wife in your Life.

Læt. How my Heart aches! All my Comfort lies in his Impudence; and, Heaven be praiſed, he has a conſiderable Portion. [*Aſide.*

Bellm. In ſhort, then, I was informed of the Opportunity of your Abſence by my Spy (for, faith, honeſt *Iſaac*, I have a long Time deſigned thee this Favour); I knew *Spintext* was to come by your Direction—But I laid a Trap for him, and procured his Habit; in which I paſſed upon your Servants, and was conducted hither. I pretended a Fit of the Colic, to excuſe my lying down upon your Bed; hoping that, when ſhe heard of it, her Good-nature would bring her to adminiſter Remedies for my Diſtemper—You know what might have followed—But, like an uncivil Perſon, you knocked at the Door before your Wife was come to me.

Fond. Ha! This is apocryphal; I may chuſe whether I will believe it or no.

Bellm. That you may, faith! and I hope you won't believe a Word on't—But I can't help telling the Truth for my Life.

Fond. How! would not you have me believe you, fay you?

Bellm. No; for then you muſt of conſequence part with your Wife, and there will be ſome Hopes of having her upon the Publick; then the Encouragement of a ſeparate Maintenance—

Fond. No, no; for that Matter—when ſhe and I part, ſhe'll carry her ſeparate Maintenance about her.

Læt. Ah, cruel Dear! how can you be ſo barbarous? You'll break my Heart, if you talk of parting. [*Cries.*

Fond.

Fond. Ah, diſſembling Vermin!

Bellm. How canſt thou be ſo cruel, *Iſaac?* Thou haſt the Heart of a Mountain-tiger. By the Faith of a ſincere Sinner, ſhe's innocent, for me. Go to him, Madam; fling your ſnowy Arms about his ſtubborn Neck; bathe his relentleſs Face in your ſalt trickling Tears—

[*She goes and hangs upon his Neck, and kiſſes him.* Bellmour *kiſſes her Hand behind* Fondlewife's *Back.*

So! a few ſoft Words and a Kiſs, and the good Man melts. See how kind Nature works and boils over in him!

Læt. Indeed! my Dear, I was but juſt come down Stairs, when you knocked at the Door; and the Maid told me Mr. *Spintext* was ill of the Colic upon our Bed. And won't you ſpeak to me, cruel *Nykin?* Indeed, I'll die, if you don't.

Fond. Ah! no, no; I cannot ſpeak, my Heart's ſo full—I have been a tender Huſband, a tender Yokefellow; you know I have—But thou haſt been a faithleſs *Dalilah*; and the *Philiſtines*—heh! Art thou not vile and unclean, heh? Speak! [*Weeping.*

Læt. No-h. [*Sighing.*

Fond. O that I could believe thee!

Læt. Oh! my Heart will break. [*Seeming to faint.*

Fond. Heh! how? No; ſtay, ſtay; I will believe thee, I will—Pray bend her forward, Sir.

Læt. Oh! oh! Where is my Dear?

Fond. Here! here! I do believe thee. I won't believe my own Eyes.

Bellm. For my Part, I am ſo charmed with the Love of your Turtle to you, that I'll go and ſolicit Matrimony with all my Might and Main.

Fond. Well, well, Sir, as long as I believe it, 'tis well enough. No Thanks to you, Sir, for her Virtue—But I'll ſhew you the Way out of my Houſe, if you

you pleaſe—Come, my Dear. Nay, I will believe thee; I do, i'feck!

Bell. See the great Bleſſing of an eaſy Faith! Opinion cannot err.

No Huſband by his Wife can be deceiv'd;
She ſtill is virtuous, if ſhe's ſo believ'd.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

BELLMOUR, *in Fanatic Habit,* SETTER, HEARTWELL, LUCY.

Bellm. SETTER! well encountered.

Sett. Joy of your Return, Sir! Have you made a good Voyage? or have you brought your own Lading back?

Bellm. No; I have brought nothing but Ballaſt back—made a delicious Voyage, *Setter*; and might have rode at Anchor in the Port till this Time, but the Enemy ſurprized us—I would unrig.

Sett. I attend you, Sir.

Bellm. Ha! Is not that *Heartwell* at *Sylvia's* Door? Be gone quickly; I'll follow you—I would not be known. Pox take them! they ſtand juſt in my Way.

SCENE II.

BELLMOUR, HEARTWELL, LUCY.

Heartw. I'm impatient till it be done.

Lucy.

Lucy. That may be, without troubling yourſelf to go again for your Brother's Chaplain. Don't you ſee that talking Form of Godlineſs?

Heartw. O ay; he is a Fanatic.

Lucy. An Executioner qualified to do your Buſineſs. He has been lawfully ordained.

Heartw. I'll pay him well, if you'll break the Matter to him.

Lucy. I warrant you—Do you go and prepare your Bride.

SCENE III.

BELLMOUR, LUCY.

Bellm. Humph! ſits the Wind there?—What a lucky Rogue am I! Oh, what Sport will be here, if I can perſuade this Wench to Secreſy!

Lucy. Sir! Reverend Sir!

Bellm. Madam! [*Diſcovers himſelf.*

Lucy. Now, Goodneſs have Mercy upon me! Mr. *Bellmour!* is it you?

Bellm. Even I. What doſt think?

Lucy. Think! that I ſhould not believe my Eyes, and that you are not what you ſeem to be.

Bellm. True. But, to convince thee who I am, thou knoweſt my old Token. [*Kiſſes her.*

Lucy. Nay, Mr. *Bellmour:* O Lard! I believe you are a Parſon in good earneſt, you kiſs ſo devoutly.

Bellm. Well, your Buſineſs with me, *Lucy?*

Lucy. I had none, but through Miſtake.

Bellm. Which Miſtake you muſt go thorough with, *Lucy.*—Come, I know the Intrigue between *Heartwell* and your Miſtreſs; and you miſtook me for *Tribulation Spintext*, to marry them—ha! Are not Matters in this Poſture?—Confeſs:—Come, I'll be faithful; I will i'faith—What! diffide in me, *Lucy?*

Lucy. Alas-a-day! You and Mr. *Vainlove*, between you, have ruined my poor Miſtreſs: You have made a Gap

a Gap in her Reputation; and can you blame her if ſhe make it up with a Huſband?

Bellm. Well, is it as I ſay?

Lucy. Well, it is then: But you'll be ſecret?

Bellm. Phuh, ſecret, ay:—And, to be out of thy Debt, I'll truſt thee with another Secret. Your Miſtreſs muſt not marry *Heartwell*, *Lucy*.

Lucy. How! O Lord!—

Bellm. Nay, don't be in Paſſion, *Lucy*:—I'll provide a fitter Huſband for her.—Come, here's Earneſt of my good Intentions for thee too; let this mollify—[*Gives her Money.*] Look you, *Heartwell* is my Friend; and tho' he be blind, I muſt not ſee him fall into the Snare, and unwittingly marry a Whore.

Lucy. Whore! I'd have you to know my Miſtreſs ſcorns—

Bellm. Nay, nay: Look you, *Lucy*; there are Whores of as good Quality.—But to the Purpoſe, if you will give me leave to acquaint you with it.—Do you carry on the Miſtake of me: I'll marry them.—Nay, don't pauſe;—if you do, I'll ſpoil all.—I have ſome private Reaſons for what I do, which I'll tell you within. In the mean time, I promiſe—and rely upon me—to help your Miſtreſs to a Huſband: Nay, and thee too, *Lucy*.—Here's my Hand, I will; with a freſh Aſſurance. [*Gives her more Money.*

Lucy. Ah, the Devil is not ſo cunning.—You know my eaſy Nature.—Well, for once I'll venture to ſerve you; but, if you do deceive me, the Curſe of all kind, tender-hearted Women light upon you!

Bellm. That's as much as to ſay, *The Pox take me!*—Well, lead on.

SCENE IV.

VAINLOVE, SHARPER, *and* SETTER.

Sharp. Juſt now, ſay you, gone in with *Lucy*?

Sett. I ſaw him, Sir, and ſtood at the Corner where you

you found me, and over-heard all they ſaid: Mr. *Bellmour* is to marry them.

Sharp. Ha, ha; 'twill be a pleaſant Cheat—I'll plague *Heartwell* when I ſee him. Pr'ythee, *Frank*, let's teaze him; make him fret till he foam at the Mouth, and diſgorge his Matrimonial Oath with Intereſt—Come, thou art muſty—

Sett. [*To* Sharper.] Sir, a Word with you.

[*Whiſpers him.*

Vainl. Sharper ſwears ſhe has forſworn the Letter—I'm ſure he tells me Truth—but I am not ſure ſhe told him Truth.—Yet ſhe was unaffectedly concerned, he ſays; and often bluſhed with Anger and Surprize:—And ſo I remember in the Park.—She had Reaſon, if I wrong her—I begin to doubt.

Sharp. Sayeſt thou ſo?

Sett. This Afternoon, Sir, about an Hour before my Maſter received the Letter.

Sharp. In my Conſcience, like enough.

Sett. Ay, I know her, Sir; at leaſt, I'm ſure I can fiſh it out of her: She's the very Sluice to her Lady's Secrets:—'Tis but ſetting her Mill a going, and I can drain her of them all.

Sharp. Here *Frank*, your Blood-hound has made out the Fault. This Letter, that ſo ſticks in thy Maw, is counterfeit; only a Trick of *Sylvia* in Revenge, contrived by *Lucy*.

Vainl. Ha! It has a Colour—But how do you know it, Sirrah?

Sett. I do ſuſpect as much;—becauſe why, Sir—She was pumping me about how your Worſhip's Affairs ſtood towards Madam *Araminta*; as, when you had ſeen her laſt? when you were to ſee her next? and, where you were to be found at that Time? and ſuch like.

Vainl. And where did you tell her?

Sett. In the *Piazza*.

Vainl.

Vainl. There I received the Letter—It muſt be ſo —And why did you not find me out, to tell me this before, Sot?

Sett. Sir, I was Pimping for Mr. *Bellmour.*

Sharp. You were well employed:—I think there is no Objection to the Excuſe.

Vainl. Pox on my ſaucy Credulity!—If I have loſt her, I deſerve it. But, if Confeſſion and Repentance be of Force, I'll win her, or weary her into a Forgiveneſs.

Sharp. Methinks I long to ſee *Bellmour* come forth.

SCENE V.

SHARPER, BELLMOUR, SETTER.

Sett. Talk of the Devil—See where he comes.

Sharp. Hugging himſelf in his proſperous Miſchief —No real Fanatic can look better pleaſed after a ſucceſsful Sermon of Sedition.

Bellm. Sharper! fortify thy Spleen: Such a Jeſt! Speak when thou art ready.

Sharp. Now, were I ill-natured, would I utterly diſappoint thy Mirth: Hear thee tell thy mighty Jeſt, with as much Gravity as a Biſhop hears Venereal Cauſes in the Spiritual Court: Not ſo much as wrinkle my Face with one Smile; but let thee look ſimply, and laugh by thyſelf.

Bellm. Pſhaw, no; I have a better Opinion of thy Wit—Gad! I defy thee.—

Sharp. Were it not Loſs of Time, you ſhould make the Experiment. But honeſt *Setter*, here, over-heard you with *Lucy*, and has told me all.

Bellm. Nay then, I thank thee for not putting me out of Countenance. But, to tell you ſomething you don't know—I got an Opportunity (after I had married them) of diſcovering the Cheat to *Sylvia.* She took it at firſt, as another Woman would the like Diſappointment;

pointment; but my Promiſe to make her amends quickly with another Huſband, ſomewhat pacified her.

Sharp. But how the Devil do you think to acquit yourſelf of your Promiſe? Will you marry her yourſelf?

Bellm. I have no ſuch Intentions at preſent—Pr'ythee, wilt thou think a little for me? I am ſure the ingenious Mr. *Setter* will aſſiſt.

Sett. O Lord, Sir!

Bellm. I'll leave him with you, and go ſhift my Habit.

SCENE VI.

SHARPER, SETTER, *Sir* JOSEPH WITTOL, *and* BLUFFE.

Sharp. Heh! ſure, Fortune has ſent this Fool hither on purpoſe. *Setter*, ſtand cloſe; ſeem not to obſerve them; and, hark-ye— [*Whiſpers.*

Bluffe. Fear him not—I am prepared for him now; and he ſhall find he might have ſafer rouzed a ſleeping Lion.

Sir *J. Witt.* Huſh, huſh: Don't you ſee him?

Bluffe. Shew him to me.—Where is he?

Sir *J. Witt.* Nay, don't ſpeak ſo loud—I don't jeſt, as I did a little while ago—Look yonder—Egad, if he ſhould hear the Lion roar, he'd cudgel him into an Aſs, and his primitive Braying. Don't you remember the Story in *Æſop's Fables*, Bully? Egad, there are good Morals to be picked out of *Æſop's Fables*, let me tell you that; and *Reynard the Fox* too.

Bluffe. Damn your Morals!

Sir *J. Witt.* Pr'ythee, don't ſpeak ſo loud.

Bluffe. Damn your Morals! I muſt revenge the Affront done to my Honour. [*In a low Voice.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay; do, do, Captain, if you think fitting—You may diſpoſe of your own Fleſh as you think

think fitting, d'ye ſee:—But, by the Lord *Harry*, I'll leave you.

[*Stealing away upon his Tip-toes.*

Bluffe. Prodigious! What, will you forſake your Friend in Extremity! You can't in Honour refuſe to carry him a Challenge.

[*Almoſt whiſpering, and treading ſoftly after him.*

Sir *J. Witt* Pr'ythee, what do you ſee in my Face, that looks as if I would carry a Challenge? Honour is your Province, Captain; take it—All the World know me to be a Knight, and a Man of Worſhip.

Sett. I warrant you, Sir; I'm inſtructed.

Sharp. Impoſſible! *Araminta* take a Liking to a Fool! [*Aloud.*

Sett. Her Head runs on nothing elſe, nor ſhe can talk of nothing elſe.

Sharp. I know ſhe commended him all the while we were in the Park; but I thought it had been only to make *Vainlove* jealous—

Sir *J. Witt.* How's this? Good Bully, hold your Breath, and let's hearken. Egad, this muſt be I.—

Sharp. Death! it can't be.—An Oaf, an Ideot, a Wittal.

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay; now it's out, 'tis I, my own individual Perſon.

Sharp. A Wretch, that has flown for Shelter to the loweſt Shrub of Mankind, and ſeeks Protection from a blaſted Coward.

Sir *J. Witt.* That's you, *Bully* Back.

[Bluffe *frowns upon Sir* Joſeph.

Sharp. She has given *Vainlove* her Promiſe, to marry him before To-morrow Morning—Has ſhe not?

[*To* Setter.

Sett. She has, Sir;—And I have it in Charge to attend her all this Evening, in order to conduct her to the Place appointed.

Sharp. Well, I'll go and inform your Maſter; and do you preſs her to make all the Haſte imaginable.

SCENE

SCENE VII.

SETTER, *Sir* JOSEPH WITTOL, BLUFFE.

Sett. Were I a Rogue now, what a noble Prize could I diſpoſe of! A goodly Pinnace, richly laden, and to launch forth under my auſpicious Convoy. Twelve thouſand Pounds, and all her Rigging; beſides what lies concealed under Hatches—Ha! All this committed to my Care!—Avaunt, Temptation! —*Setter*, ſhew thyſelf a Perſon of Worth; be true to thy Truſt, and be reputed honeſt. Reputed honeſt! Hum! Is that all? Ay: For to be honeſt is nothing; the Reputation of it is all! Reputation! what have ſuch poor Rogues as I to do with Reputation? 'tis above us; and for Men of Quality, they are above it; ſo that Reputation is even as fooliſh a thing as Honeſty. And for my Part, if I meet Sir *Joſeph* with a Purſe of Gold in his Hand, I'll diſpoſe of mine to the beſt Advantage. [*Aſide.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Heh, heh, heh! Here it is for you, i'faith, Mr. *Setter.* Nay, I'll take you at your Word. [*Chinking a Purſe.*

Sett. Sir *Joſeph* and the Captain too! undone, undone! I'm undone, my Maſter's undone, my Lady's undone, and all the Buſineſs is undone.

Sir *J. Witt.* No, no, never fear, Man, the Lady's Buſineſs ſhall be done. What!—Come, Mr. *Setter*, I have over-heard all, and to ſpeak, is but Loſs of Time; but, if there be Occaſion, let theſe worthy Gentlemen intercede for me.

[*Gives him Gold.*

Sett. O Lord, Sir, what d'ye mean? Corrupt my Honeſty!—They have indeed very perſuading Faces. But—

Sir *J. Witt.* 'Tis too little, there's more, Man. There, take all—Now—

Sett.

Setter. Well, Sir *Joſeph*, you have ſuch a winning Way with you—

Sir *J. Witt.* And how, and how, good *Setter*, did the little Rogue look, when ſhe talked of Sir *Joſeph?* Did not her Eyes twinkle, and her Mouth water? Did not ſhe pull up her little Bubbies? And—egad, I'm ſo overjoyed—And ſtroke down her Belly? and then ſtep aſide to tie her Garter, when ſhe was thinking of her Love: Hey, *Setter!*

Setter. Oh, yes, Sir.

Sir *J. Wittol.* How now, *Bully?* What, melancholy, becauſe I'm in the Lady's Favour?—No Matter, I'll make your Peace—I know they were a little ſmart upon you—But, I warrant, I'll bring you into the Lady's good Graces.

Bluffe. Pſhaw, I have Petitions to ſhow, from other-gueſs Toys than ſhe. Look here; Theſe were ſent me this Morning—There, read. [*Shews Letters.*] That—That's a Scrawl of Quality. Here, here's from a Counteſs too. Hum—No, hold—that's from a Knight's Wife, ſhe ſent it me by her Huſband—But here, both theſe are from Perſons of great Quality.

Sir *J. Witt.* They are either from Perſons of great Quality, or no Quality at all, 'tis ſuch a damn'd ugly Hand. [*While Sir* Joſeph *reads*, Bluffe *whiſpers* Setter.

Setter. Captain, I would do any thing to ſerve you; but this is ſo difficult—.

Bluffe. Not at all. Don't I know him?

Sett. You'll remember the Conditions?—

Bluffe. I'll give it you under my Hand—In the mean time, here's Earneſt. [*Gives him Money.*] Come, Knight—I'm capitulating with Mr. *Setter* for you.

Sir *J. Witt.* Ah, honeſt *Setter*;—Sirrah, I'll give thee any thing but a Night's Lodging.

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

SHARPER *tugging in* HEARTWELL.

Sharp. Nay, pr'ythee leave Railing, and come along with me: May be ſhe mayn't be within. 'Tis but to yon Corner-houſe?

Heart. Whither! Whither? Which Corner-houſe?

Sharp. Why, there; the two white Poſts.

Heart. And who would you viſit there, ſay you? (Ooons, how my Heart akes!)

Sharp. Pſhaw, thou'rt ſo troubleſome and inquiſitive—Why, I'll tell you; 'tis a young Creature that *Vainlove* debauched, and has forſaken. Did you never hear *Bellmour* chide him about *Sylvia?*

Heart. Death, and Hell, and Marriage! My Wife! [*Aſide.*

Sharp. Why thou art as muſty as a new-married Man, that had found his Wife Knowing the firſt Night.

Heart. Hell, and the Devil! Does he know it? But, hold—If he ſhould not, I were a Fool to diſcover it.—I'll diſſemble, and try him. [*Aſide.*]—Ha, ha, ha! Why, *Tom*, is that ſuch an Occaſion of Melancholy? Is it ſuch an uncommon Miſchief?

Sharp. No, Faith; I believe not.—Few Women, but have their Year of Probation, before they are cloiſtered in the narrow Joys of Wedlock. But, pr'ythee come along with me, or I'll go and have the Lady to myſelf. B'w'y, *George.* [*Going.*

Heart. O Torture! How he racks and tears me!—Death! Shall I own my Shame, or wittingly let him go and whore my Wife? No, that's inſupportable—Oh, *Sharper!*

Sharp. How now?

Heart. Oh, I am—married!

Sharp. (Now hold, Spleen!) Married!

Heart. Certainly, irrecoverably married!

Sharp. Heaven forbid, Man! How long?

Heart. Oh, an Age, an Age! I have been married theſe two Hours.

Sharp. My old Batchelor married! That were a Jeſt! Ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Death! D'ye mock me? Heark ye, if either you eſteem my Friendſhip, or your own Safety—come not near that Houſe—that Corner-houſe—that hot Brothel. Aſk no Queſtions. [*Exit.*

Sharp. Mad, by this Light!

Thus Grief ſtill treads upon the Heels of Pleaſure,
Married in Haſte, we may repent at Leiſure!

SCENE IX.

SHARPER, SETTER.

Sett. Some by Experience find thoſe Words miſplac'd:

At Leiſure married, they repent in Haſte.
As I ſuppoſe, my Maſter *Heartwell.*

Sharp. Here again, my *Mercury!*

Sett. Sublimate, if you pleaſe, Sir: I think my Atchievements do deſerve the Epithet—*Mercury* was a Pimp too; but, though I bluſh to own it, at this Time, I muſt confeſs I am ſomewhat fallen from the Dignity of my Function, and do condeſcend to be ſcandalouſly employed in the Promotion of vulgar Matrimony.

Sharp. As how, dear dextrous Pimp?

Sett. Why, to be brief, for I have weighty Affairs depending—Our Stratagem ſucceeded as you intended—*Blaffe* turns errant Traitor; bribes me, to make a private Conveyance of the Lady to him, and put a Sham Settlement upon Sir *Joſeph.*

Sharp. O Rogue! Well, but I hope—

Sett. No, no; never fear me, Sir—I privately informed the Knight of the Treachery; who has agreed,

ſeemingly to be cheated, that the Captain may be ſo in reality.

Sharp. Where's the Bride?

Sett. Shifting Cloaths for the Purpoſe, at a Friend's Houſe of mine. Here's Company Company coming; if you'll walk this Way, Sir, I'll tell you.

SCENE X.

BELLMOUR, BELINDA, ARAMINTA, *and* VAINLOVE.

Vainl. Oh, 'twas Frenzy all: Cannot you forgive it?—Men in Madneſs have a Title to your Pity. [*To* Araminta.

Aram. Which they forfeit, when they are reſtored to their Senſes.

Vainl. I am not preſuming beyond a Pardon.

Aram. You who could reproach me with one Counterfeit, how inſolent would a real Pardon make you! But there's no need to forgive what is not worth my Anger.

Bel. On my Conſcience, I could find in my Heart to marry thee, purely to be rid of thee—At leaſt, thou art ſo troubleſome a Lover, there's Hopes thou'lt make a more than ordinary quiet Huſband. [*To* Bellmour.

Bellm. Say you ſo?—Is that a Maxim among you?

Bel. Yes: You fluttering Men of the Mode have made Marriage a meer *French* Diſh.

Bellm. I hope there's no *French* Sawce! [*Aſide.*

Bel. You are ſo curious in the Preparation, that is, your Courtſhip, one would think you meant a noble Entertainment—But, when we come to feed, 'tis all Froth, and Poor, but in Shew. Nay, often, only Remains, which have been, I know not how many Times, warmed for other Company, and at laſt ſerved up cold to the Wife.

Bellm. That were a miſerable Wretch indeed, who could not afford one warm Diſh for the Wife of his

Boſom—But! you timorous Virgins form a dreadful Chimæra of a Huſband, as of a Creature contrary to that ſoft, humble, pliant, eaſy Thing, a Lover; ſo gueſs at Plagues in Matrimony, in Oppoſition to the Pleaſures of Courtſhip. Alas! Courtſhip to Marriage, is but as the Muſic in the Play-houſe, till the Curtain is drawn; but, that once up, then opens the Scene of Pleaſure.

Bel. Oh, foh!—no: Rather, Courtſhip to Marriage, is as a very witty Prologue to a very dull Play.

SCENE XI.

[*To them*] SHARPER.

Sharp. Hiſt—*Bellmour:* If you'll bring the Ladies, make Haſte to *Sylvia's* Lodgings, before *Heartwell* has fretted himſelf out of Breath.—

Bellm. You have an Opportunity now, Madam, to revenge yourſelf upon *Heartwell*, for affronting your Squirrel. [*To* Belinda.

Bel. O the filthy rude Beaſt!

Aram. 'Tis a laſting Quarrel: I think, he has never been at our Houſe ſince.

Bellm. But give yourſelves the Trouble to walk to that Corner-houſe, and I'll tell you by the Way what may divert and ſuprize you.

SCENE XII. SYLVIA'S *Lodgings.*

HEARTWELL *and* BOY.

Heart. Gone forth, ſay you, with her Maid!

Boy. There was a Man too, that fetched them out—*Setter*, I think they called him.

Heart. Soh!—That precious Pimp too!—Damn'd, damn'd Strumpet! Could ſhe not contain herſelf on her Wedding-day? not hold out till Night? O curſed State! How wide we err, when, apprehenſive of the Load of Life,

We hope to find
That Help which Nature meant in Woman-kind,
To Man that Supplemental Self deſign'd;
But proves a burning Cauſtic when apply'd:
And Adam, *ſure, could with more Eaſe abide*
The Bone when broken, than when made a Bride.

SCENE XIII.

[*To him*] BELLMOUR, BELINDA, VAINLOVE, ARAMINTA.

Bellm. Now, *George*, what, rhyming! I thought the Chimes of Verſe were paſt, when once the doleful Marriage Knell was rung.

Heart. Shame and Confuſion! I am expoſed.

[Vainlove *and* Araminta *talk apart.*

Bel. Joy, Joy, Mr. *Bridegroom*, I give you Joy, Sir.

Heart. 'Tis not in thy Nature to give me Joy—A Woman can as ſoon give Immortality.

Bel. Ha, ha, ha! O Gad! Men grow ſuch Clowns when they are married—

Bellm. That they are fit for no Company but their Wives.

Bel. Nor for them neither, in a little Time—I ſwear, at the Month's End, you ſhall hardly find a married Man, that will do a civil Thing to his Wife, or ſay a civil Thing to any body elſe. How he looks already! Ha, ha, ha!

Bellm. Ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Death! am I made your Laughing-ſtock? For you, Sir, I ſhall find a Time; but take off your Waſp here, or the Clown may grow boiſterous; I have a Fly-flap.

Bel. You have Occaſion for't; your Wife has been blown upon.

Bellm. That's home.

Heart.

Heart. Not Fiends or Furies could have added to my Vexation, or any thing but another Woman!—You've racked my Patience; be gone, or by—

Bellm. Hold, hold. What the Devil, thou wilt not draw upon a Woman!

Vainl. What's the Matter?

Aram. Bleſs me! what have you done to him?

Bel. Only touched a galled Beaſt till he winched.

Vainl. *Bellmour*, give it over; you vex him too much; 'tis all ſerious to him.

Bel. Nay, I ſwear, I begin to pity him, myſelf.

Heart. Damn your Pity!—But let me be calm a little.—How have I deſerved this of you? any of you? Sir, have I impaired the Honour of your Houſe, promiſed your Siſter Marriage, and whored her? wherein have I injured you? did I bring a Phyſician to your Father when he lay expiring, and endeavour to prolong his Life, and you one and twenty? Madam, have I had an Opportunity with you and baulked it? did you ever offer me the Favour, that I refuſed it? Or—

Bel. Oh foh! What does the filthy Fellow mean? Lard! let me be gone.

Aram. Hang me, if I pity you; you are right enough ſerved.

Bellm. This is a little ſcurrilous though.

Vainl. Nay, 'tis a Sore of your own ſcratching—Well, *George*—

Heart. You are the principal Cauſe of all my preſent Ills. If *Sylvia* had not been your Miſtreſs, my Wife might have been honeſt.

Vainl. And if *Sylvia* had not been your Wife, my Miſtreſs might have been juſt.—There, we are even—But have a good Heart, I heard of your Misfortune, and come to your Relief.

Heartwell. When Execution's over, you offer a Reprieve.

Vainl. What would you give?

Heart. Oh! Any thing, every thing, a Leg or two, or an Arm; nay, I would be divorced from my Virility, to be divorced from my Wife.

SCENE XIV.

[*To them*] SHARPER.

Vainl. Faith, that's a ſure Way—But here's one can tell you Freedom better cheap.

Sharp. Vainlove, I have been a kind of a Godfather to you, yonder. I have promiſed and vowed ſome Things in your Name, which I think you are bound to perform.

Vainl. No ſigning to a Blank, Friend.

Sharp. No, I'll deal fairly with you—'Tis a full and free Diſcharge to Sir *Joſeph Wittoll* and Captain *Bluffe*, for all Injuries whatſoever, done unto you by them, until the preſent Date hereof—How ſay you?

Vainl. Agreed.

Sharp. Then, let me beg theſe Ladies to wear their Maſks, a Moment.—Come in, Gentlemen and Ladies.

Heart. What the Devil's all this to me?

Vainl. Patience.

SCENE *The Laſt.*

[*To them*] *Sir* JOSEPH WITTOLL, BLUFFE, SYLVIA, LUCY, SETTER.

Bluffe. All Injuries whatſoever, Mr. *Sharper*.

Sir *J. Witt.* Ay, ay, whatſoever, Captain; ſtick to that whatſoever.

Sharp. 'Tis done, theſe Gentlemen are Witneſſes to the general Releaſe.

Vainl. Ay, ay, to this inſtant Moment—I have paſſed an Act of Oblivion.

Bluffe. 'Tis very generous, Sir, ſince I needs muſt own—

Sir

Sir *J. Witt.* No, no, Captain, you need not own; heh, heh, heh! 'Tis I muſt own—

Bluffe.—That you are over-reached too, ha, ha, ha, only a little Art-Military uſed—only undermined, or ſo, as ſhall appear by the fair *Araminta* my Wife's Permiſſion.—Oh, the Devil, cheated at laſt!

[Lucy *unmaſks.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Only a little Art-Military Trick, Captain, only countermined, or ſo.—Mr. *Vainlove*, I ſuppoſe you know whom I have got now—but all's forgiven!

Vainl. I know whom you have not got; pray, Ladies, convince him. [Aram. *and* Belin. *unmaſk.*

Sir *J. Witt.* Ah! O Lord! my Heart akes—Ah! *Setter*, a Rogue of all Sides!

Sharp. Sir *Joſeph*, you had better have pre-engaged this Gentleman's Pardon: For though *Vainlove* be ſo generous to forgive the Loſs of his Miſtreſs—I know not how *Heartwell* may take the Loſs of his Wife.

[Sylvia *unmaſks.*

Heart. My Wife! By this Light, 'tis ſhe, the very Cockatrice!—Oh *Sharper!* Let me embrace thee—But art thou ſure ſhe is really married to him?

Sett. Really and lawfully married, I am Witneſs.

Sharp. Bellmour will unriddle to you.

[Heartwell *goes to* Bellmour.

Sir *J. Witt.* Pray, Madam, who are you? For, I find, you and I are like to be better acquainted.

Sylvia. The worſt of me is, that I am your Wife—

Sharp. Come, Sir *Joſeph*, your Fortune is not ſo bad as you fear—A fine Lady, and a Lady of very good Quality.

Sir *J. Witt.* Thanks to my Knight-hood, ſhe's a Lady—

Vainl.—That deſerves a Fool with a better Title—Pray uſe her as my Relation, or you ſhall hear on't.

Bluffe. What, are you a Woman of Quality too, Spouſe?

Setter. And my Relation; pray let her be reſpected accordingly—Well, honeſt *Lucy*, fare thee well—I think, you and I have been Play-fellows, off and on, any time this ſeven Years.

Lucy. Hold your prating—I'm thinking what Vocation I ſhall follow while my Spouſe is planting Laurels in the Wars.

Bluffe. No more Wars, Spouſe, no more Wars—While I plant Laurels for my Head abroad, I may find the Branches ſprout at home.

Heart, Bellmour, I approve thy Mirth, and thank thee—And I cannot in Gratitude (for I ſee which Way thou art going) ſee thee fall into the ſame Snare out of which thou haſt delivered me.

Bellm. I thank thee, *George*, for thy good Intention—But there is a Fatality in Marriage—For I find I'm reſolute.

Heart. Then good Counſel will be thrown away upon you—For my Part, I have once eſcaped—and when I wed again, may ſhe be—ugly, as an old Bawd!

Vainl. Ill-natured, as an old Maid—

Bellm. Wanton, as a young Widow—

Sharp. And jealous, as a barren Wife.

Heart. Agreed.

Bellm. Well; 'midſt of theſe dreadful Denunciations, and notwithſtanding the Warning and Example before me, I commit myſelf to laſting Durance.

Bel. Priſoner, make much of your Fetters.

[*Giving her Hand.*

Bellm. Frank, Will you keep us in Countenance?

Vainl. May I preſume to hope ſo great a Bleſſing?

Aram. We had better take the Advantage of a little of our Friends Experience firſt.

Bellm. On my Conſcience, ſhe dares not conſent, for fear he ſhould recant! [*Aſide*]—Well, we ſhall have your

your Company to Church in the Morning—May be it may get you an Appetite, to ſee us fall-to before you. *Setter*, did not you tell me?—

Setter. They're at the Door: I'll call them in.

A DANCE.

Bellm. Now ſet we forward on a Journey for Life—Come, take your Fellow-Travelers. Old *George*, I'm ſorry to ſee thee ſtill plod on alone.

Heart. With gaudy Plumes and gingling Bells made proud,
The youthful Beaſt ſets forth, and neighs aloud.
A Morning Sun his tinſel'd Harneſs gilds,
And the firſt Stage a down-hill Green-ſward yields.
But, Oh!—
What rugged Ways attend the Noon of Life!
(Our Sun declines,) and with what anxious Strife,
What Pain, we tug that galling Load, a Wife!
All Courſers the firſt Heat with Vigour run;
But 'tis with Whip and Spur the Race is won.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. BARRY.

AS a raſh Girl, who will all Hazards run,
And be enjoy'd, tho' ſure to be undone;
Soon as her Curioſity is over,
Would give the World ſhe could her Toy recover:
So fares it with our Poet; and I'm ſent
To tell you, he already does repent:
Would you were all as forward, to keep Lent!
Now the Deed's done, the Giddy Thing has Leiſure
To think o'th' Sting, that's in the Tail of Pleaſure.
Methinks I hear him in Conſideration!
What will the World ſay? Where's my Reputation?
Now that's at Stake—No, Fool; 'tis out of Faſhion.
If Loſs of that ſhould follow Want of Wit,
How many undone Men were in the Pit!
Why that's ſome Comfort to an Author's Fears,
If he's an Aſs, he will be tried by's Peers.
But hold—I am exceeding my Commiſſion;
My Buſineſs here was, humbly to Petition:
But we're ſo us'd to rail on theſe Occaſions,
I could not help one Trial of your Patience:
For 'tis our Way (you know) for fear o'th' worſt,
To be before-hand ſtill, and cry Fool firſt.
How ſay you, Sparks? how do you ſtand affected?
I ſwear, young Bayes *within is ſo dejected,*
'Twould grieve your Hearts to ſee him; ſhall I call him?
But then you cruel Critics would ſo maul him!
Yet, may be, you'll encourage a Beginner;
But how?—Juſt as the Devil does a Sinner.
Women and Wits are us'd e'en much at one,
You gain your Ends, and damn them when you've done!

THE

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES MONTAGUE,

One of the Lords of the TREASURY.

SIR,

I Heartily wish this Play were as perfect as I intended it, that it might be more worthy your Acceptance; and that my Dedication of it to you might be more becoming that Honour and Esteem which I, with every body who is so fortunate as to know you, have for you. It had your Countenance when yet unknown; and, now it is made public, wants your Protection.

I would not have any body imagine that I think this Play without its Faults, for I am conscious of several. I confess I designed (whatever Vanity or Ambition occasioned that Design) to have written a true and regular Comedy: but I found it an Undertaking which put me in Mind of—*Sudet multum, frustraque laborat*

Labores ausus idem. And now, to make Amends for the Vanity of ſuch a Deſign, I do confeſs both the Attempt and the imperfect Performance. Yet I muſt take the Boldneſs to ſay, I have not miſcarried in the Whole; for the Mechanical Part of it is regular. That I may ſay with as little Vanity, as a Builder may ſay he has built a Houſe according to the Model laid down before him; or a Gardener that he has ſet his Flowers in a Knot of ſuch or ſuch a Figure. I deſigned the Moral firſt, and to that Moral I invented the Fable, and do not know that I have borrowed one Hint of it any where. I made the Plot as ſtrong as I could, becauſe it was ſingle; and I made it ſingle, becauſe I would avoid Confuſion, and was reſolved to preſerve the three Unities of the Drama. Sir, this Diſcourſe is very impertinent to you, whoſe Judgement much better can diſcern the Faults, than I can excuſe them; and whoſe Good-nature, like that of a Lover, will find out thoſe hidden Beauties (if there are any ſuch) which it would be great Immodeſty for me to diſcover. I think I do not ſpeak improperly, when I call you a *Lover* of Poetry; for it is very well known ſhe has been a very kind Miſtreſs to you; ſhe has not denied you the laſt Favour; and ſhe has been fruitful to you in a moſt beautiful Iſſue—If I break off abruptly here, I hope every body will underſtand that it is to avoid a Commendation, which, as it is your Due, would be moſt eaſy for me to pay, and too troubleſome for you to receive.

I have, ſince the Acting of this Play, hearkened after the Objections which have been made to it; for I was conſcious where a true Critic might have put me upon my Defence. I was prepared for the Attack; and am pretty confident I could have vindicated ſome Parts, and excuſed others; and where there were any plain Miſcarriages, I would moſt ingenuouſly have

have confeſſed them. But I have not heard any thing laid ſufficient to provoke an Anſwer. That which looks moſt like an Objection, does not relate in particular to this Play, but to all or moſt that ever have been written; and that is, SOLILOQUY. Therefore I will anſwer it, not only for my own ſake, but to ſave others the Trouble, to whom it may hereafter be objected.

I grant, that for a Man to talk to himſelf, appears abſurd and unnatural; and indeed it is ſo in moſt Caſes; but the Circumſtances which may attend the Occaſion, make great Alteration. It oftentimes happens to a Man, to have Deſigns which require him to himſelf, and in their Nature cannot admit of a Confident. Such, for certain, is all Villainy; and other leſs miſchievous Intentions may be very improper to be communicated to a ſecond Perſon. In ſuch a Caſe, therefore, the Audience muſt obſerve, whether the Perſon upon the Stage takes any Notice of them at all, or no: for, if he ſuppoſes any one to be by, when he talks to himſelf, it is monſtrous and ridiculous to the laſt Degree. Nay, not only in this Caſe, but in any Part of a Play, if there is expreſſed any Knowledge of an Audience, it is inſufferable. But otherwiſe, when a Man in Soliloquy reaſons with himſelf, and *Pro's* and *Con's*, and weighs all his Deſigns; we ought not to imagine that this Man either talks to us, or to himſelf; he is only thinking, and thinking ſuch Matter as were inexcuſable Folly in him to ſpeak. But, becauſe we are concealed Spectators of the Plot in Agitation, and the Poet finds it neceſſary to let us know the whole Myſtery of his Contrivance, he is willing to inform us of this Perſon's Thoughts; and to that End is forced to make uſe of the Expedient of Speech, no other better Way being yet invented for the Communication of Thought.

Another

Another very wrong Objection has been made by ſome, who have not taken Leiſure to diſtinguiſh the Characters. The Hero of the Play, as they are pleaſed to call him, (meaning *Mellefont*) is a Gull, and made a Fool, and cheated. Is every Man a Gull and a Fool, that is deceived? At that rate, I am afraid, the two Claſſes of Men will be reduced to one, and the Knaves themſelves be at a Loſs to juſtify their Title. But, if an open-hearted honeſt Man, who has an entire Confidence in one whom he takes to be his Friend, and whom he has obliged to be ſo; and who (to confirm him in his Opinion) in all Appearance, and upon ſeveral Trials, has been ſo: If this Man be deceived by the Treachery of the other; muſt he of Neceſſity commence Fool immediately, only becauſe the other has proved a Villain? Ay, but there was Caution given to *Mellefont*, in the firſt Act, by his Friend *Careleſs*. Of what Nature was that Caution? Only to give the Audience ſome Light into the Character of *Maſkwell*, before his Appearance; and not to convince *Mellefont* of his Treachery; for that was more than *Careleſs* was then able to do: He never knew *Maſkwell* guilty of any Villainy; he was only a ſort of Man which he did not like. As for his ſuſpecting his Familiarity with my Lady *Touchwood*; let them examine the Anſwer that *Mellefont* makes him, and compare it with the Conduct of *Maſkwell's* Character through the Play.

I would beg them again to look into the Character of *Maſkwell*, before they accuſe *Mellefont* of Weakneſs for being deceived by him. For, upon ſumming up the Enquiry into this Objection, it may be found they have miſtaken Cunning in one Character, for Folly in another.

But there is one Thing, at which I am more concerned than all the falſe Criticiſms that are made upon me;

me; and that is, ſome of the Ladies are offended. I am heartily ſorry for it, for I declare I would rather diſoblige all the Critics in the World, than one of the Fair Sex. They are concerned that I have repreſented ſome Women vicious and affected: How can I help it? It is the Buſineſs of a Comic Poet, to paint the Vices and Follies of Human-kind; and there are but two Sexes, Male and Female, *Men* and *Women*, which have a Title to Humanity: And if I leave one half of them out, the Work will be Imperfect. I ſhould be very glad of an Opportunity to make my Compliment to thoſe Ladies who are offended; but they can no more expect it in a Comedy, than to be tickled by a Surgeon when he is letting them Blood. They who are virtuous or diſcreet, ſhould not be offended; for ſuch Characters as theſe diſtinguiſh *them*, and make their Beauties more ſhining and obſerved: And they who are of the other Kind, may nevertheleſs paſs for ſuch, by ſeeming not to be diſpleaſed, or touched, with the Satire of this *Comedy*. Thus have they alſo wrongfully accuſed me of doing them a Prejudice, when I have in reality done them a Service.

You will pardon me, Sir, for the Freedom I take of making Anſwers to other People, in an Epiſtle which ought wholly to be ſacred to you: But, ſince I intend the Play to be ſo too, I hope I may take the more Liberty of juſtifying it, where it is in the Right.

I muſt now, Sir, declare to the World, how kind you have been to my Endeavours; for, in Regard to what was well meant, you have excuſed what was ill performed. I beg you would continue the ſame Method in your Acceptance of this Dedication. I know no other Way of making a Return to that Humanity you ſhewed, in protecting an Infant, but by enrolling it in your Service, now that it is of Age and come into the

the World. Therefore be pleaſed to accept of this, as an Acknowledgement of the Favour you have ſhewn me, and an Earneſt of the real Service and Gratitude of,

SIR,

Your Moſt Obliged,

Humble Servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

TO

TO MY DEAR FRIEND

Mr. CONGREVE:

On his COMEDY, called, The DOUBLE-DEALER.

WELL, then; the promis'd Hour is come at laſt:
The preſent Age of Wit obſcures the paſt:
Strong were our Sires; and, as they fought, they writ,
Conquering with Force of Arms, and Dint of Wit:
Their's was the Giant Race, before the Flood;
And thus, when Charles *return'd, our Empire ſtood.*
Like Janus, *he the ſtubborn Soil manur'd,*
With Rules of Huſbandry the Rankneſs cur'd:
Tam'd us to Manners, when the Stage was rude;
And boiſt'rous Engliſh *Wit, with Art endued.*
Our Age was cultivated thus at length;
But what we gain'd in Skill, we loſt in Strength.
Our Builders were with Want of Genius curſt;
The Second Temple was not like the Firſt:
Till You, the beſt Vitruvius, *come at length;*
Our Beauties equal; but excel our Strength,
Firm Doric *Pillars found your ſolid Baſe:*
The fair Corinthian *crowns the higher Space;*
Thus all below is Strength, and all above is Grace.
In eaſy Dialogue is Fletcher's *Praiſe;*
He mov'd the Mind, but had not Power to raiſe.
Great Jonſon *did by Strength of Judgement pleaſe:*
Yet, doubling Fletcher's *Force, he wants his Eaſe.*
In differing Talents both adorn'd their Age;
One for the Study, t'other for the Stage.
But both to Congreve *juſtly ſhall ſubmit,*
One match'd in Judgement, both o'er-match'd in Wit.

In

In him all Beauties of this Age we ſee;
Etherege's *Courtſhip*, Southern's *Purity*;
The Satire, Wit, and Strength, of manly Wycherly.
All this in blooming Youth you have atchiev'd;
Nor are your foil'd Contemporaries griev'd;
So much the Sweetneſs of your Manners move,
We cannot envy you, becauſe we love.
Fabius *might joy in* Scipio, *when he ſaw*
A Beardleſs Conſul made againſt the Law,
And join his Suffrage to the Votes of Rome;
Though he with Hannibal *was overcome.*
Thus old Romano *bow'd to* Raphael's *Fame;*
And Scholar to the Youth he taught, became.
Oh, that your Brows my Laurel had ſuſtain'd!
Well had I been depos'd, if you had reign'd!
The Father had deſcended for the Son;
For only You are lineal to the Throne.
Thus when the State one Edward *did depoſe;*
A greater Edward *in his Room aroſe.*
But now, not I, but Poetry is curs'd;
For Tom *the Second reigns like* Tom *the Firſt.*
But let them not miſtake my Patron's Part;
Nor call his Charity their own Deſert,
Yet this I propheſy; Thou ſhalt be ſeen
(Tho' with ſome ſhort Parentheſis between)
High on the Throne of Wit; and ſeated there,
Not mine (that's little) but thy Laurel wear.
Thy firſt Attempt an early Promiſe made;
That early Promiſe this has more than paid.
So bold, yet ſo judiciouſly, you dare,
That your leaſt Praiſe is, to be regular.
Time, Place, and Action, may with Pains be wrought,
But Genius muſt be born; and never can be taught.
This is your Portion; this your native Store;
Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakeſpeare *gave as much; ſhe could not give him more!*

Maintain

Maintain your Poſt: That's all the Fame you need;
For 'tis impoſſible you ſhould proceed.
Already I am worn with Cares and Age;
And juſt abandoning th' ungrateful Stage:
Unprofitably kept at Heaven's Expence,
I live a Rent-charge on his Providence:
But You, whom every Muſe and Grace adorn,
Whom I foreſee to better Fortune born,
Be kind to my Remains; and oh, defend,
Againſt your Judgement, your departed Friend!
Let not th' inſulting Foe my Fame purſue;
But ſhade thoſe Laurels which deſcend to You:
And take for Tribute what theſe Lines expreſs;
You merit more; nor could my Love do leſs.

JOHN DRYDEN.

PROLOGUE.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

MOORS have this Way (as Story tells) to know
Whether their Brats are truly got, or no;
Into the Sea the new-born Babe is thrown,
There, as Inſtinct directs, to ſwim, or drown.
A barbarous Device, to try if Spouſe
Has kept religiouſly her nuptial Vows.

Such are the Trials, Poets make of Plays,
Only they truſt to more inconſtant Seas:
So does our Author, this his Child commit
To the tempeſtuous Mercy of the Pit.
To know if it be truely born of Wit.

Critics, avaunt! for you are Fiſh of Prey,
And feed, like Sharks, upon an Infant Play.
Be every Monſter of the Deep away!
Let's a fair Trial have, and a clear Sea.

Let Nature work, and do not damn too ſoon,
For Life will ſtruggle long, ere it ſink down;
And will at leaſt riſe thrice, before it drown.
Let us conſider, had it been our Fate,
Thus hardly to be prov'd legitimate!
I will not ſay, we'd all in Danger been,
Were each to ſuffer for his Mother's Sin:
But, by my Troth, I cannot avoid thinking,
How nearly ſome good Men might have 'ſcap'd ſinking.
But, Heav'n be prais'd! this Cuſtom is confin'd
Alone to th' Offspring of the Muſes Kind:

Our

Our Chriſtian Cuckolds are more bent to Pity;
I know not one Moor-*Husband in the City.*
I'th' good Man's Arms the chopping Baſtard thrives,
For he thinks all his own, that is his Wife's.

Whatever Fate is for this Play deſign'd,
The Poet's ſure he ſhall ſome Comfort find:
For, if his Muſe has play'd him falſe, the worſt
That can befal him is, to be divorc'd;
You Huſbands, judge if that be to be curs'd!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, 1774.

MEN.	DRURY-LANE.
Maſkwell, a villain; pretended Friend to *Melleſont*, Gallant to Lady *Touchwood*, and in Love with *Cynthia*,	Mr. REDDISH.
Lord *Touchwood*, Uncle to *Melleſont*,	Mr. PACKER.
Melleſont, promiſed to, and in Love with, *Cynthia*.	Mr. BRERETON.
Careleſs, his Friend,	Mr. PALMER.
Lord *Froth*, a ſolemn Coxcomb,	Mr. PARSONS.
Briſk, a pert Coxcomb,	Mr. DODD.
Sir *Paul Plyant*, an Uxorious, Fooliſh, old Knight; Brother to Lady *Touchwood*, and Father to *Cynthia*,	Mr. KING.
Saygrace,	Mr. WRIGHT.

WOMEN.	
Lady *Touchwood*, in Love with *Melleſont*,	Mrs. HOPKINS.
Cynthia, Daughter to Sir *Paul* by a former Wife, promiſed to *Melleſont*,	Miſs PLATT.
Lady *Froth*, a great Coquet; Pretender to Poetry, Wit, and Learning,	Mrs. ABINGTON.
Lady *Plyant*, inſolent to her Huſband, and eaſy to any Pretender,	Miſs YOUNGE.

Boy, Footmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, A Gallery in Lord TOUCHWOOD's Houſe, with Chambers adjoining.

THE

THE DOUBLE DEALER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Gallery in Lord TOUCHWOOD'S *House, with Chambers adjoining.*

Enter CARELESS, *croſſing the Stage, with his Hat, Gloves, and Sword, in his Hands; as juſt riſen from Table:* MELLEFONT *following him.*

Mell. NED, *Ned*, whither ſo faſt? What, turned Flincher! Why, you will not leave us?

Carel. Where are the Women? I am weary of guzzling, and begin to think them the better Company.

Mell. Then thy Reaſon ſtaggers, and thou'rt almoſt drunk.

Carel. No, Faith, but your Fools grow noiſy—and if a Man muſt endure the Noiſe of Words without Senſe, I think the Women have more muſical Voices, and become Nonſenſe better.

Mell. Why, they are at the End of the Gallery; retired to their Tea, and Scandal; according to their ancient Cuſtom, after Dinner.—But I made a Pretence to follow you, becauſe I had ſomething to ſay to you in private, and I am not like to have many Opportunities this Evening.

Carel. And here is this Coxcomb moſt critically come to interrupt you.

SCENE II.

[*To them*] BRISK.

Briſk. Boys, Boys, Lads, where are you? What, do you give Ground? Mortgage for a Bottle! ha? *Careleſs*, this is your Trick; you are always ſpoiling Company by leaving it.

Carel. And thou art always ſpoiling Company by coming into it.

Briſk. Pooh! ha, ha, ha! I know you envy me. Spite, proud Spite, by the Gods! and burning Envy—I'll be judged by *Melleſont* here, who gives and takes Raillery better, you or I. Pſhaw, Man, when I ſay you ſpoil Company by leaving it, I mean you leave nobody for the Company to laugh at. I think, there I was with you, ha? *Melleſont.*

Mell. On my Word, *Briſk*, that was a HomeThruſt; you have ſilenced him.

Briſk. Oh! my dear *Melleſont*, let me periſh, if thou art not the Soul of Converſation, the very Eſſence of Wit, and Spirit of Wine!—The Deuce take me, if there were three good Things ſaid, or one underſtood, ſince thy Amputation from the Body of our Society.—He! I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough: Egad, I could not have ſaid it out of thy Company—*Careleſs*, ha?

Carel. Hum, ay, what is it?

Briſk. O, *mon Cœur!* what is it? Nay, gad! I'll puniſh you, for Want of Apprehenſion: The Deuce take me if I tell you!

Mell. No, no, hang him, he has no Taſte.—But, dear *Briſk*, excuſe me, I have a little Buſineſs.

Carel. Pr'ythee get thee gone; thou ſee'ſt we are ſerious.

Mell.

Mell. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up Good-humour and Senſe in the Company: Pr'ythee do, they'll fall aſleep elſe.

Briſk. Egad, ſo they will—Well I will, I will; gad! you ſhall command me, from the *Zenith* to the *Nadir*—But the Deuce take me if I ſay a good thing till you come—But pry'thee, dear Rogue, make haſte, pr'ythee make haſte, I ſhall burſt elſe—And yonder's your Uncle, my Lord *Touchwood*, ſwears he'll diſinherit you, and Sir *Paul Plyant* threatens to diſclaim you for a Son-in-Law, and my Lord *Froth* won't dance at your Wedding To-morrow; nor, the Deuce take me! I won't write your Epithalamium—and ſee what a Condition you're like to be brought to.

Mell. Well, I'll ſpeak but three Words, and follow you.

Briſk. Enough, enough; *Careleſs*, bring your Apprehenſion along with you.

SCENE III.

MELLEFONT, CARELESS.

Carel. Pert Coxcomb!

Mell. Faith, it is a good-natured Coxcomb, and has very entertaining Follies—You muſt be more humane to him; at this Juncture, it will do me Service.—I'll tell you, I would have Mirth continued this Day at any Rate; though Patience purchaſe Folly, and Attention be paid with Noiſe. There are Times when Senſe may be unreaſonable, as well as Truth. Pr'ythee do thou wear none To-day; but allow *Briſk* to have Wit, that thou mayſt ſeem a Fool.

Carel. Why, how now? why this extravagant Propoſition?

Mell. O, I would have no room for ſerious Deſign; for I am jealous of a Plot. I would have Noiſe and Impertinence keep my Lady *Touchwood's* Head from

working; for Hell is not more buſy than her Brain, nor contains more Devils than that Imaginations.

Carel. I thought your Fear of her had been over—Is not To-morrow appointed for your Marriage with *Cynthia*; and her Father, Sir *Paul Plyant*, come to ſettle the Writings this Day, on purpoſe?

Mell. True; but you ſhall judge whether I have not Reaſon to be alarmed. None beſides you and *Maſkwell* are acquainted with the Secret of my Aunt *Touchwood's* violent Paſſion for me. Since my firſt Refuſal of her Addreſſes, ſhe has endeavoured to do me all ill Offices with my Uncle; yet has managed them with that Subtilty, that to him they have borne the Face of Kindneſs; while her Malice, like a dark Lantern, only ſhone upon me, where it was directed. Still it gave me leſs Perplexity to prevent the Succeſs of her Diſpleaſure, than to avoid the Importunities of her Love; and of two Evils, I thought myſelf favoured in her Averſion: but whether urged by her Deſpair, and the ſhort Proſpect of Time ſhe ſaw, to accompliſh her Deſigns; whether the Hopes of Revenge, or of her Love, terminated in the View of this my Marriage with *Cynthia*, I know not; but this Morning ſhe ſurprized me in my Bed—

Carel. Was there ever ſuch a Fury? It is well Nature has not put it into her Sex's Power to raviſh!—Well, bleſs us! proceed. What followed?

Mell. What at firſt amazed me; for I looked to have ſeen her in all the Tranſports of a ſlighted and revengeful Woman. But when I expected Thunder from her Voice, and Lightning in her Eyes; I ſaw her melted into Tears, and huſhed into a Sigh. It was long before either of us ſpoke; Paſſion had tied her Tongue, and Amazement mine.—In ſhort, the Conſequence was thus. She omitted nothing that the moſt violent Love could urge, or tender Words expreſs: which when ſhe ſaw had no Effect, but ſtill I pleaded Honour and Nearneſs of Blood to my Uncle; then

then came the Storm I feared at firſt; for, ſtarting from my Bed-ſide like a Fury, ſhe flew to my Sword, and with much ado I prevented her doing me or herſelf a Miſchief. Having diſarmed her, in a Guſt of Paſſion ſhe left me, and in a Reſolution, confirmed by a thouſand Curſes, not to cloſe her Eyes till they had ſeen my Ruin.

Carel. Exquiſite Woman! But what, the Devil, does ſhe think thou haſt no more Senſe, than to get an Heir upon her Body, to diſinherit thyſelf? for, as I take it, this Settlement upon you is, with a Proviſo that your Uncle have no Children.

Mell. It is ſo. Well, the Service you are to do me will be a Pleaſure to yourſelf; I muſt get you to engage my Lady *Plyant* all this Evening, that my pious Aunt may not work her to her Intereſt. And if you chance to ſecure her to yourſelf, you may incline her to mine. She is handſome, and knows it; is very ſilly, and thinks ſhe has Senſe, and has an old fond Huſband.

Carel. I confeſs, a very fair Foundation for a Lover to build upon.

Mell. For my Lord *Froth*, he and his Wife will be ſufficiently taken up, with admiring one another, and *Briſk's* Gallantry, as they call it. I'll obſerve my Uncle myſelf; and *Jack Maſkwell* has promiſed me, to watch my Aunt narrowly, and give me Notice upon any Suſpicion. As for Sir *Paul*, my wife Father-in-Law that is to be, my dear *Cynthia* has ſuch a Share in his Fatherly Fondneſs, he would ſcarce make her a Moment uneaſy to have her happy hereafter.

Carel. So, you have manned your Works; but I wiſh you may not have the weakeſt Guard, where the Enemy is ſtrongeſt.

Mell. Maſkwell, you mean; pr'ythee why ſhould you ſuſpect him?

Carel. Faith, I cannot help it; you know I never liked him; I am a little ſuperſtitious in Phyſiognomy.

Mell. He has Obligations of Gratitude, to bind him to me; his Dependance upon my Uncle is through my Means.

Carel. Upon your Aunt—you mean.

Mell. My Aunt?

Carel. I'm miſtaken if there be not a Familiarity between them, you do not ſuſpect—notwithſtanding her Paſſion for you.

Mell. Pooh, pooh! nothing in the World but his Deſign to do me Service; and he endeavours to be well in her Eſteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Carel. Well, I ſhall be glad to be miſtaken; but your Aunt's Averſion in her Revenge cannot be any Way ſo effectually ſhown, as in bringing forth a Child to diſinherit you. She is handſome and cunning, and naturally wanton. *Maſkwell* is Fleſh and Blood at beſt, and Opportunities between them are frequent. His Affection to you, you have confeſſed, is grounded upon his Intereſt; that you have tranſplanted; and, ſhould it take Root in my Lady, I don't ſee what you can expect from the Fruit.

Mell. I confeſs the Conſequence is viſible, were your Suſpicions juſt.—But ſee, the Company is broke up; let us meet them.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] *Lord* TOUCHWOOD, *Lord* FROTH, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, *and* BRISK.

Lord *Touchw.* Out upon't, Nephew!—Leave your Father-in-Law and me, to maintain our Ground againſt young People?

Mell. I beg your Lordſhip's Pardon—We were juſt returning—

Sir *P. Pl.* Were you, Son? Gadsbud! much better as it is—Good, ſtrange! I ſwear I'm almoſt tipſy—t'other Bottle would have been too powerful for me—as ſure as can be, it would.—We wanted your Com-

pany: But Mr. *Briſk*—Where is he? I ſwear and vow, he's a moſt facetious Perſon—and the beſt Company—And, my Lord *Froth*, your Lordſhip is ſo merry a Man, he, he, he!

Lord *Froth*. O foy, Sir *Paul!* what do you mean? Merry! O barbarous! I'd as lieve you called me Fool.

Sir *P. Pl.* Nay, I proteſt and vow now, it is true; when Mr. *Briſk* jokes, your Lordſhip's Laugh does ſo become you, he, he, he!

Lord *Froth*. Ridiculous! Sir *Paul*, you're ſtrangely miſtaken; I find Champagne is powerful. I aſſure you, Sir *Paul*, I laugh at nobody's Jeſt but my own, or a Lady's; I aſſure you, Sir *Paul*.

Briſk. How? how, my Lord? what, affront my Wit! Let me periſh, do I never ſay any thing worthy to be laughed at?

Lord *Froth*. O foy! don't miſapprehend me, I don't ſay ſo, for I often ſmile at your Conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a Man of Quality, than to Laugh; it is ſuch a vulgar Expreſſion of the Paſſion! Every body can laugh. Then eſpecially to laugh at the Jeſt of an inferior Perſon, or when any body elſe of the ſame Quality does not laugh with one—ridiculous! To be pleaſed with what pleaſes the Crowd! Now, when I laugh, I always laugh alone.

Briſk. I ſuppoſe, that's becauſe you laugh at your own Jeſts, egad! ha, ha, ha!

Lord *Froth*. He, he! I ſwear, though, your Raillery provokes me to a Smile.

Briſk. Ay, my Lord, it's a Sign I hit you in the Teeth, if you ſhewed them.

Lord *Froth*. He, he, he! I ſwear, that's ſo very pretty, I can't forbear.

Carel. I find a Quibble bears more Sway in your Lordſhip's Face, than a Jeſt.

Lord *Touchw.* Sir *Paul*, if you pleaſe, we'll retire to the Ladies, and drink a Diſh of Tea, to ſettle our Heads.

Sir *P. Pl.* With all my Heart.—Mr. *Briſk*, you'll come to us—or call me when you joke, I'll be ready to laugh incontinently.

SCENE V.

MELLEFONT, CARELESS, *Lord* FROTH, BRISK.

Mell. But does your Lordſhip never ſee Comedies?

Lord *Froth.* O yes, ſometimes—But I never laugh.

Mell. No?

Lord *Froth.* Oh, no—Never laugh indeed, Sir.

Carel. No! why what do you go there for?

Lord *Froth.* To diſtinguiſh myſelf from the Commonalty, and mortify the Poets; the Fellows grow ſo conceited, when any of their fooliſh Wit prevails upon the Side-boxes.—I ſwear—he, he, he! I have often conſtrained my Inclinations to laugh—he, he, he! to avoid giving them Encouragement.

Mell. You are cruel to yourſelf, my Lord, as well as malicious to them.

Lord *Froth.* I confeſs I did myſelf ſome Violence at firſt; but now, I think, I have conquered it.

Briſk. Let me periſh, my Lord, but there is ſomething very particular in the Humour; 'tis true, it makes againſt Wit, and I'm ſorry for ſome Friends of mine that write, but—egad, I love to be malicious.—Nay, deuce take me! there's Wit in't too—and Wit muſt be foiled by Wit; cut a Diamond with a Diamond: no other Way, egad.

Lord *Froth.* Oh! I thought you would not be long before you found out the Wit.

Carel. Wit! In what? Where the Devil's the Wit, in not laughing when a Man has a Mind to't?

Briſk.

Briſk. O Lord! why, can't you find it out?—Why there 'tis, in the not laughing—Don't you apprehend me?—My Lord, *Careleſs* is a very honeſt Fellow, but harkee—you underſtand me, ſomewhat heavy, a little ſhallow, or ſo—Why I'll tell you now: Suppoſe now you come up to me—Nay, pr'ythee, *Careleſs*, be inſtructed—Suppoſe, as I was ſaying, you come up to me, holding your Sides, and laughing, as if you would—Well—I look grave, and aſk the Cauſe of this immoderate Mirth.—You laugh on ſtill, and are not able to tell me—Still I look grave, not ſo much as ſmile.

Carel. Smile? no, what the Devil ſhould you ſmile at, when you ſuppoſe I can't tell you?

Briſk. Pſhaw, pſhaw, pr'ythee don't interrupt me.—But I tell you, you ſhall tell me—at laſt—but it ſhall be a great while firſt.

Carel. Well, but pr'ythee don't let it be a great while, becauſe I long to have it over.

Briſk. Well then, you tell me ſome good Jeſt, or very witty Thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die—and I hear it, and look thus.—Would not you be diſappointed?

Carel. No; for, if it were a witty Thing, I ſhould not expect you to underſtand it.

Lord *Froth.* O foy! Mr. *Careleſs*, all the World allows Mr. *Briſk* to have Wit; my Wife ſays, he has a great deal, I hope you think her a Judge.

Briſk. Pooh, my Lord, his Voice goes for nothing.—I can't tell how to make him apprehend.—Take it t'other Way. Suppoſe I ſay a witty Thing to you—

Carel. Then I ſhall be diſappointed indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, *Briſk*; he is obſtinately bent not to be inſtructed.

Briſk. I'm ſorry for him, the Deuce take me!

Mell. Shall we go to the Ladies, my Lord?

Lord *Froth.* With all my Heart; methinks we are a Solitude without them.

Mell. Or what ſay you to another Bottle of Champagne?

Lord *Froth.* O, for the Univerſe, not a Drop more I beſeech you. Oh intemperate! I have a Fluſhing in my Face already.

[*Takes out a Pocket-glaſs, and looks in it.*

Briſk. Let me ſee, let me ſee, my Lord, I broke my Glaſs that was in the Lid of my Snuff-box. Hum! Deuce take me! I have encouraged a Pimple here too. [*Takes the Glaſs, and looks.*

Lord *Froth.* Then you muſt mortify him with a Patch; my Wife ſhall ſupply you. Come, Gentlemen, *allons*; here is Company coming.

SCENE VI.

Lady TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

Lady *Touchw.* I will hear no more.—You are falſe and ungrateful; come, I know you falſe.

Maſkw. I have been frail, I confeſs, Madam, for your Ladyſhip's Service.

Lady *Touchw.* That I ſhould truſt a Man, whom I had known betray his Friend!

Maſkw. What Friend have I betrayed? or to whom?

Lady *Touchw.* Your fond Friend, *Mellefont*, and to me; can you deny it?

Maſkw. I do not.

Lady *Touchw.* Have you not wronged my Lord, who has been a Father to you in your Wants, and given you Being? Have you not wronged him in the higheſt Manner, in his Bed?

Maſkw. With your Ladyſhip's Help, and for your Service, as I told you before. I can't deny that neither.—Any Thing more, Madam?

Lady *Touchw.* More! audacious Villain! O, what's more, is moſt my Shame—Have you not diſhonoured me?

Maſkw.

Maſkw. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my Life; ſo that Accuſation's anſwered: on to the next.

Lady *Touchw.* Death! do you dally with my Paſſion? Inſolent Devil! But have a Care—provoke me not; for, by the eternal Fire, you ſhall not eſcape my Vengeance.—Calm Villain! How unconcerned he ſtands, confeſſing Treachery and Ingratitude! Is there a Vice more black?—O, I have Excuſes, thouſands for my Faults; Fire in my Temper, Paſſions in my Soul, apt to every Provocation; oppreſſed at once with Love and with Deſpair. But a ſedate, a thinking Villain, whoſe black Blood runs temperately bad, what Excuſe can clear?

Maſkw. Will you be in Temper, Madam? I would not talk not to be heard. I have been [*She walks about diſordered*] a very great Rogue for your Sake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a Rogue ſtill, to do you Service; and you are flinging Conſcience and Honour in my Face, to rebate my Inclinations. How am I to behave myſelf? You know I am your Creature, my Life and Fortune in your Power; to diſoblige you, brings me certain Ruin. Allow it, I would betray you; I would not be a Traitor to myſelf. I do not pretend to Honeſty, becauſe you know I am a Raſcal: But I would convince you, from the Neceſſity of my being firm to you.

Lady *Touchw.* Neceſſity, Impudence! Can no Gratitude incline you? no Obligations touch you? Have not my Fortune, and my Perſon, been ſubjected to your Pleaſure? Were you not in the Nature of a Servant, and have not I in effect made you Lord of all, of me, and of my Lord? Where is that humble Love, the Languiſhing, that Adoration, which once was paid me, and everlaſtingly engaged?

Maſkw. Fixt, rooted in my Heart, whence nothing can remove them; yet you—

Lady *Touchw.* Yet, what yet?

Maſkw.

Maſkw. Nay, miſconceive me not, Madam, when I ſay I have had a generous and a faithful Paſſion, which you had never favoured, but through Revenge and Policy.

Lady *Touchw.* Ha!

Maſkw. Look you, Madam, we are alone—Pray contain yourſelf, and hear me. You know you loved your Nephew when I firſt ſighed for you; I quickly found it; an Argument that I loved; for, with that Art you veiled your Paſſion, it was imperceptible to all but jealous Eyes. This Diſcovery made me bold, I confeſs it; for by it, I thought you in my Power. Your Nephew's Scorn of you added to my Hopes; I watched the Occaſion, and took you, juſt repulſed by him, warm at once with Love and Indignation; your Diſpoſition, my Arguments, and happy Opportunity, accompliſhed my Deſign; I preſt the yielding Minute, and was bleſt. How I have loved you ſince, Words have not ſhewn; then how ſhould Words expreſs?

Lady *Touchw.* Well, mollifying Devil!—And have I not met your Love with forward Fire?

Maſkw. Your Zeal, I grant, was ardent, but miſplaced; there was Revenge in View; that Woman's Idol had defiled the Temple of the God, and Love was made a Mock-worſhip.—A Son and Heir wou'd have edged young *Melleſont* upon the Brink of Ruin, and left him none but you to catch at for Prevention.

Lady *Touchw.* Again, provoke me! Do you wind me like a Larum, only to rouſe my own ſtilled Soul for your Diverſion?—Confuſion!

Maſkw. Nay, Madam, I am gone, if you relapſe.—What needs this? I ſay nothing but what you yourſelf, in open Hours of Love, have told me. Why ſhould you deny it? Nay, how can you deny it? Is not all this preſent Heat owing to the ſame Fire? Do you not love him ſtill? How have I this Day offended you, but in not breaking off his Match with *Cynthia?*

Which

Which ere To-morrow ſhall be done—had you but Patience.

Lady *Touchw.* How? what ſaid you, *Maſkwell?*—Another Caprice, to unwind my Temper?

Maſkw. By Heaven, no; I am your Slave, the Slave of all your Pleaſures; and will not reſt till I have given you Peace, would you ſuffer me.

Lady *Touchw.* O *Maſkwell!* in vain I do diſguiſe me from thee; thou knoweſt me, knoweſt the very inmoſt Windings and Receſſes of my Soul.—Oh *Mellefont!* I burn! Married To-morrow! Deſpair ſtrikes me. Yet my Soul knows I hate him too: Let him but once be mine, and next immediate Ruin ſeize him.

Maſkw. Compoſe yourſelf, you ſhall poſſeſs and ruin him too.—Will that pleaſe you?

Lady *Touchw.* How, how? Thou dear, thou precious Villain! how?

Maſkw. You have already been tampering with my Lady *Plyant.*

Lady *Touchw.* I have: She is ready for any Impreſſion I think fit.

Maſkw. She muſt be thoroughly perſuaded, that *Mellefont* loves her.

Lady *Touchw.* She is ſo credulous that Way naturally, and likes him ſo well, that ſhe will believe it faſter than I can perſuade her. But I don't ſee what you can propoſe from ſuch a trifling Deſign; for her firſt converſing with *Mellefont* will convince her of the contrary.

Maſkw. I know it—I don't depend upon it.—But it will prepare ſomething elſe; and gain us Leiſure to lay a ſtronger Plot: If I gain a little Time, I ſhall not want Contrivance.

One Minute gives Invention to deſtroy,
What, to rebuild, will a whole Age employ.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

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ACT II. SCENE I.

Lady FROTH *and* CYNTHIA.

Cynth. INDEED, Madam! Is it poſſible your Ladyſhip could have been ſo much in Love?

Lady *Froth.* I could not ſleep one Wink for three Weeks together.

Cynth. Prodigious! I wonder, Want of Sleep, and ſo much Love, and ſo much Wit as your Ladyſhip has, did not turn your Brain.

Lady *Froth.* O my dear *Cynthia*, you muſt not rally your Friend.—But really, as you ſay, I wonder too.—But then I had a Way.—For, between you and I, I had Whimſies and Vapours, but I gave them Vent.

Cynth. How pray, Madam?

Lady *Froth.* O I writ, writ abundantly—Do you never write?

Cynth. Write, what?

Lady *Froth.* Songs, Elegies, Satires, Encomiums, Panegyrics, Lampoons, Plays, or Heroic Poems.

Cynth. O Lord! not I, Madam; I'm content to be a courteous Reader.

Lady *Froth.* O Inconſiſtent! In Love, and not write! If my Lord and I had been both of your Temper, we had never come together.—O bleſs me! What a ſad Thing would that have been, if my Lord and I ſhould never have met!

Cynth. Then neither my Lord nor you would ever have met with your Match, on my Conſcience.

Lady *Froth.* On my Conſcience, no more we ſhould; thou ſayeſt right—for, ſure, my Lord *Froth* is as fine a Gen-

a Gentleman, and as much a Man of Quality! Ah! nothing at all of the common Air—I think I may ſay he wants nothing, but a blue Ribbon and a Star, to make him ſhine the very Phoſphorus of our Hemiſphere. Do you underſtand thoſe two hard Words? If you don't, I'll explain them to you.

Cynth. Yes, yes, Madam, I'm not ſo ignorant—At leaſt I won't own it, to be troubled with your Inſtructions! [*Aſide.*

Lady *Froth.* Nay, I beg your Pardon! but, being derived from the *Greek*, I thought you might have eſcaped the Etymology.—But I'm the more amazed, to find you a Woman of Letters, and not write! Bleſs me! how can *Mellefont* believe you love him?

Cynth. Why faith, Madam, he that won't take my Word, ſhall never have it under my Hand.

Lady *Froth.* I vow, *Mellefont* is a pretty Gentleman; but methinks he wants a Manner.

Cynth. A Manner! What is that, Madam?

Lady *Froth.* Some diſtinguiſhing Quality, as for Example, the *bel Air* or *brillant* of Mr. *Briſk*; the Solemnity, yet Complaiſance, of my Lord; or ſomething of his own that ſhould look a little *Je-ne-ſçay-quoyſh*; he is too much a Mediocrity, in my Mind.

Cynth. He does not indeed affect either Pertneſs or Formality; for which I like him. Here he comes.

Lady *Froth.* And my Lord with him: Pray obſerve the Difference.

SCENE II.

[*To them*] *Lord* FROTH, MELLEFONT, *and* BRISK.

Cynth. Impertinent Creature! I could almoſt be angry with her now. [*Aſide.*

Lady *Froth.* My Lord, I have been telling *Cynthia*, how much I have been in Love with you; I ſwear I have; I'm not

not ashamed to own it now. Ah! it makes my Heart leap, I vow, I ſigh when I think on it: My dear Lord ha, ha! do you remember, my Lord?

[*Squeezes him by the Hand, looks kindly on him, ſighs, and then laughs out.*

Lord *Froth.* Pleaſant Creature! perfectly well: ah! that Look, ay, there it is; who could reſiſt! 'twas ſo my Heart was made a Captive firſt, and ever ſince it has been in Love with happy Slavery.

Lady *Froth.* O that Tongue, that dear deceitful Tongue! that charming Softneſs in your Mien and your Expreſſion! And then your Bow! Good my Lord, bow as you did when I gave you my Picture; here, ſuppoſe this my Picture— [*Gives him a Pocket-glaſs.* Pray mind my Lord; ah! he bows charmingly, nay, my Lord, you ſhan't kiſs it ſo much; I ſhall grow jealous, I vow now.

[*He bows profoundly low, then kiſſes the Glaſs.*

Lord *Froth.* I ſaw myſelf there, and kiſſed it for your Sake.

Lady *Froth.* Ah! Gallantry to the laſt Degree!—Mr. *Briſk*, you're a Judge; was ever any Thing ſo well bred as my Lord?

Briſk. Never any Thing—but your Ladyſhip, let me periſh.

Lady *Froth.* O, prettily turned again! Let me die but you have a great deal of Wit. Mr. *Mellefont*, don't you think Mr. *Briſk* has a World of Wit?

Mell. O, yes, Madam.

Briſk. O dear! Madam—

Lady *Froth.* An infinite deal!

Briſk. O Heavens! Madam—

Lady *Froth.* More Wit than any body.

Briſk. I am everlaſtingly your humble Servant, deuce take me! Madam.

Lord *Froth.* Don't you think us a happy Couple?

Cynth. I vow, my Lord, I think you the happieſt Couple in the World; for you are not only happy in one

one another, and when you are together, but happy in yourſelves, and by yourſelves.

Lord *Froth.* I hope, *Mellefont* will make a good Huſband too.

Cynth. 'Tis my Intereſt to believe he will, my Lord.

Lord *Froth.* Do you think he will love you as well as I do my Wife? I'm afraid not.

Cynth. I believe he will love me better.

Lord *Froth.* Heavens! that can never be; but why do you think ſo?

Cynth. Becauſe he has not ſo much Reaſon to be fond of himſelf.

Lord *Froth.* O your humble Servant for that, dear Madam! Well, *Mellefont*, you will be a happy Creature.

Mellefont. Ay, my Lord, I ſhall have the ſame Reaſon for my Happineſs that your Lordſhip has—I ſhall think myſelf happy.

Lord *Froth.* Ah, that's all.

Briſk. [*to Lady* Froth.] Your Ladyſhip is in the right: but egad, I'm wholly turned into Satire. I confeſs I write but ſeldom, but when I do—keen *Iambics*, egad! But my Lord was telling me, your Ladyſhip has made an Eſſay toward an Heroic Poem.

Lady *Froth.* Did my Lord tell you? Yes, I vow, and the Subject is my Lord's Love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare ſwear you won't gueſs—*The Syllabub*—ha, ha, ha!

Briſk. Becauſe my Lord's Title's *Froth*, egad, ha, ha, ha! deuce take me, very *a propos*, and ſurprizing, ha, ha, ha!

Lady *Froth.* He! ay, is not it?—And then I call my Lord *Spumoſo*; and myſelf, what do you think I call myſelf?

Briſk. Lactilla, may be—egad I cannot tell.

Lady *Froth. Biddy*, that's all; juſt my own Name.

Briſk.

Briſk. *Biddy!* egad, very pretty.—Deuce take me, if your Ladyſhip has not the Art of ſurprizing the moſt naturally in the World.—I hope you'll make me happy, in communicating the Poem.

Lady *Froth.* O, you muſt be my Confident, I muſt aſk your Advice.

Briſk. I'm your humble Servant, let me periſh—I preſume your Ladyſhip has read *Boſſu?*

Lady *Froth.* O yes, and *Rapin* and *Dacier* upon *Ariſtotle* and *Horace.*—My Lord, you muſt not be jealous, I'm communicating all to Mr. *Briſk.*

Lord *Froth.* No, no, I'll allow Mr. *Briſk*; have you nothing about you to ſhew him, my Dear?

Lady *Froth.* Yes, I believe I have.—Mr. *Briſk*, come, will you go into the next Room? and there I'll ſhew you what I have.

Lord *Froth.* I'll walk a Turn in the Garden, and come to you.

SCENE III.

MELLEFONT, CYNTHIA.

Mell. You are thoughtful, *Cynthia?*

Cynth. I'm thinking, though Marriage makes Man and Wife one Fleſh, it leaves them ſtill two Fools; and they become more conſpicuous, by ſetting off one another.

Mell. That's only when two Fools meet, and their Follies are oppoſed.

Cynth. Nay, I have known two Wits meet, and, by the Oppoſition of their Wit, render themſelves as ridiculous as Fools. 'Tis an odd Game we're going to play at: What think you of drawing Stakes, and giving over in Time?

Mell. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, becauſe it is poſſible we may loſe; ſince we have ſhuffled and cut, let us e'en turn up Trump now.

Cynth.

Cynth. Then I find it is like Cards—if either of us have a good Hand, it is an Accident of Fortune.

Mell. No, Marriage is rather like a Game at Bowls; Fortune indeed makes the Match, and the two neareſt, and ſometimes the two fartheſt are together; but the Game depends intirely upon Judgement.

Cynth. Still it is a Game, and conſequently one of us muſt be a Loſer.

Mell. Not at all; only a friendly Trial of Skill, and the Winnings to be laid out in an Entertainment.—What's here, the Muſic?—Oh, my Lord has promiſed the Company a new Song; we'll get them to give it us by the Way. [*Muſicians croſſing the Stage.*] Pray let us have the Favour of you, to practiſe the Song, before the Company hear it.

SONG.

I.

Cynthia *frowns when-e'er I wooe her,*
Yet ſhe's vext if I give over;
Much ſhe fears I ſhould undo her,
But much more to loſe her Lover:
Thus, in doubting, ſhe refuſes;
And, not winning, thus ſhe loſes.

II.

Pr'ythee, Cynthia, *look behind you,*
Age and Wrinkles will o'ertake you;
Then too late Deſire will find you,
When the Power muſt forſake you:
Think, O think, o'th' ſad Condition,
To be paſt, yet wiſh Fruition!

Mell. You ſhall have my Thanks below.
[*To the Muſic; they go out.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] *Sir* PAUL PLYANT *and Lady* PLYANT.

Sir *P. Pl.* Gads bud! I am provoked into a Fermentation, as my Lady *Froth* ſays; was ever the like read of in Story?

Lady *Pl.* Sir *Paul*, have Patience, let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir *P. Pl.* Pray your Ladyſhip, give me leave to be angry—I'll rattle him up, I warrant you; I'll firk him with a *Certiorari*.

Lady *Pl.* You firk him! I'll firk him myſelf; pray, Sir *Paul*, hold you contented.

Cynth. Bleſs me, what makes my Father in ſuch a Paſſion?—I never ſaw him thus before.

Sir *P. Pl.* Hold yourſelf contented, my Lady *Plyant*.—I find Paſſion coming upon me by Inflation, and I cannot ſubmit as formerly; therefore give Way.

Lady *Pl.* How now! will you be pleaſed to retire, and—

Sir *P. Pl.* No, marry, will I not be pleaſed; I am pleaſed to be angry, that's my Pleaſure at this Time.

Mell. What can this mean?

Lady *Pl.* Gads my Life, the Man's diſtracted. Why how now? who are you? what am I? Slidikins, can't I govern you? what did I marry you for? am I not to be abſolute and uncontroulable? is it fit a Woman of my Spirit and Conduct ſhould be contradicted, in a Matter of this Concern?

Sir *P. Pl.* It concerns me, and only me.—Beſides, I'm not to be governed at all Times. When I am in Tranquillity, my Lady *Plyant* ſhall command Sir *Paul*; but when I am provoked to Fury, I cannot incorporate with Patience, and Reaſon.—As ſoon may Tigers match with Tigers, Lambs with Lambs, and "every "Creature couple with its Foe," as the Poet ſays.

Lady

Lady *Pl.* He's hot-headed ſtill! It is in vain to talk to you; but, remember I have a Curtain Lecture for you, you diſobedient, headſtrong Brute!

Sir *P. Pl.* No, it is becauſe I won't be a Brute, and have my Head fortified, that I am thus exaſperated.—But I will protect my Honour—and yonder is the Violator of my Fame.

Lady *P.* 'Tis my Honour that is concerned, and the Violation was intended to me. Your Honour! You have none but what is in my keeping, and I can diſpoſe of it when I pleaſe—therefore don't provoke me.

Sir *P. Pl.* Hum! gads-bud, ſhe ſays true.—Well, my Lady, march on, I will fight under you then: I am convinced, as far as Paſſion will permit.

[*Lady* Plyant *and Sir* Paul *come up to* Mellefont.

Lady *Pl.* Inhuman and treacherous—

Sir *P. Pl.* Thou Serpent and firſt Tempter of Womankind!—

Cynth. Bleſs me! Sir; Madam; what mean you?

Sir *P. Pl. Thy, Thy*, come away, *Thy*; touch him not; come hither, Girl; go not near him; there's nothing but Deceit about him; Snakes are in his Peruke, and the Crocodile of *Nilus* is in his Belly; he will eat thee up alive.

Lady *Pl.* Diſhonourable, impudent Creature!

Mell. For Heaven's ſake, Madam, to whom do you direct this Language!

Lady *Pl.* Have I behaved myſelf with all the Decorum and Nicety, befitting the Perſon of Sir *Paul's* Wife? have I preſerved my Honour as it were in a Snow-houſe for theſe three Years paſt? have I been white and unſullied even by Sir *Paul* himſelf?

Sir *P. Pl.* Nay, ſhe has been an invincible Wife, even to me, that's the Truth on't.

Lady *Pl.* Have I, I ſay, preſerved myſelf, like a fair Sheet of Paper, for you to make a Blot upon?

Sir *P. Pl.* And ſhe ſhall make a Simile with any Woman in *England*.

Mell.

Mell. I am ſo amazed, I know not what to ſay.

Sir *P. Pl.* Do you think my Daughter, this pretty Creature—gads-bud! ſhe's a Wife for a Cherubin! Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a ſtalking Horſe, to ſtand before you, while you take Aim at my Wife? Gads-bud! I was never angry before in my Life, and I'll never be appeaſed again.

Mell. Hell and Damnation! This is my Aunt; ſuch Malice can be engendered no where elſe. [*Aſide.*

Lady *Pl.* Sir *Paul*, take *Cynthia* from his Sight; leave me to ſtrike him with the Remorſe of his intended Crime.

Cynth. Pray, Sir, ſtay; hear him; I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir *P. Pl.* Innocent! Why hark'ye, come hither *Thy*, hark'ye, I had it from his Aunt, my Siſter *Touchwood*—gads-bud! he does not care a Farthing for any thing of thee, but thy Portion;—why he's in Love with my Wife; he would have tantalized thee, and made a Cuckold of thy poor Father—and that would certainly have broke my Heart—I'm ſure, if ever I ſhould have Horns, they would kill me; they would never come kindly; I ſhould die of them, like a Child that was cutting his Teeth—I ſhould, indeed, *Thy*—therefore come away; but Providence has prevented all; therefore come away, when I bid you.

Cynth. I muſt obey.

SCENE V.

Lady PLYANT, MELLEFONT.

Lady *Pl.* O, ſuch a Thing! the Impiety of it ſtartles me—to wrong ſo good, ſo fair a Creature, and one that loves you tenderly—'tis a Barbarity of Barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it—

Mell. But the greateſt Villain Imagination can form, I grant it; and next to the Villainy of ſuch a Fact, is the Villainy of aſperſing me with the Guilt. How? which

which Way was I to wrong her? For yet I underſtand you not.

Lady *Pl.* Why, gads my Life, Couſin *Melleſont*, you cannot be ſo peremptory as to deny it, when I tax you with it to your Face; for, now Sir *Paul*'s gone, you are *eorum nobis*.

Mell. By Heaven, I love her more than Life, or—

Lady *Pl.* Fiddle, faddle, don't tell me of this and that, and every Thing in the World, but give me *mathemacular* Demonſtration; anſwer me directly—But I have not Patience—Oh! the Impiety of it, as I was ſaying, and the unparalleled Wickedneſs! Merciful Father! how could you think to reverſe Nature ſo, to make the Daughter the Means of procuring the Mother?

Mell. The Daughter to procure the Mother?

Lady *Pl.* Ay, for though I am not *Cynthia*'s own Mother, I am her Father's Wife; and that's near enough to make it Inceſt.

Mell. Inceſt? O my precious Aunt, and the Devil in Conjunction! [*Aſide.*

Lady *Pl.* O, reflect upon the Horror of that, and then the Guilt of deceiving every body; marrying the Daughter, only to make a Cuckold of the Father; and then ſeducing me, debauching my Purity, and perverting me from the Road of Virtue, in which I have trod thus long, and never made one Trip, not one *faux Pas!* O, conſider it, what would you have to anſwer for, if you ſhould provoke me to Frailty? Alas! Humanity is feeble, Heaven knows! very feeble, and unable to ſupport itſelf.

Mell. Where am I? is it Day? and am I awake? Madam—

Lady *Pl.* And nobody knows how Circumſtances may happen together.—To my Thinking, now, I could reſiſt the ſtrongeſt Temptation!—But yet, I know, 'tis impoſſible for me to know whether I could or not; there's no Certainty in the Things of this Life.

Mell. Madam, pray give me Leave to aſk you one Queſtion—

Lady *Pl.* O Lord! aſk me the Queſtion? I'll ſwear, I'll refuſe it; I ſwear, I'll deny it—therefore don't aſk me—nay you ſhan't aſk me, I ſwear I'll deny it. O Gemini, you have brought all the Blood into my Face; I warrant, I am as red as a Turkey-cock!—O fie, Couſin *Mellefont!*

Mell. Nay, Madam, hear me; I mean—

Lady *Pl.* Hear you? no, no; I'll deny you firſt, and hear you afterward. For one does not know how one's Mind may change upon hearing—Hearing is one of the Senſes, and all the Senſes are fallible; I won't truſt my Honour, I aſſure you; my Honour is infallible and uncomeatable.

Mell. For Heaven's Sake, Madam—

Lady *Pl.* O, name it no more!—Bleſs me, how can you talk of Heaven, and have ſo much Wickedneſs in your Heart? May be you don't think it a Sin.—They ſay ſome of you Gentlemen don't think it a Sin.—May be it is no Sin to them that don't think it ſo. Indeed, if I did not think it a Sin—But ſtill my Honour, if it were no Sin—But then, to marry my Daughter, for the Conveniency of frequent Opportunities—I'll never conſent to that—as ſure as can be, I'll break the Match.

Mell. Death and Amazement!—Madam, upon my Knees—

Lady *Pl.* Nay, nay, riſe up; come, you ſhall ſee my Good-nature. I know Love is powerful, and nobody can help his Paſſion: 'tis not your Fault; nor, I ſwear, it is not mine.—How can I help it, if I have Charms? and how can you help it, if you are made a Captive? I ſwear, it is Pity it ſhould be a Fault.—But my Honour—well, but your Honour too.—But the Sin!—well, but the Neceſſity.—O Lord! here's ſomebody coming, I dare not ſtay. Well, you muſt conſider of your Crime; and ſtrive as much as can be againſt

againſt it—ſtrive, be ſure—but don't be melancholic, don't deſpair—but never think that I'll grant you any thing; O Lord! no!—But be ſure you lay aſide all Thoughts of the Marriage; for, though I know you don't love *Cynthia*, only as a Blind for your Paſſion to me; yet it will make me jealous—O Lord! what did I ſay? jealous! no, no, I can't be jealous, for I muſt not love you—therefore don't hope—but don't deſpair neither—O, they're coming, I muſt fly.

SCENE VI.

MELLEFONT *alone.*

Mell. (after a Pauſe.) So then—ſpight of my Care and Foreſight, I am caught, caught in my Security.—Yet this was but a ſhallow Artifice, unworthy of my *Machiavilian* Aunt: There muſt be more behind; this is but the firſt Flaſh, the Priming of her Engine; Deſtruction follows hard, if not moſt preſently prevented.

SCENE VII.

[*To him*] MASKWELL.

Mell. Maſkwell, welcome; thy Preſence is a View of Land, appearing to my ſhipwrecked Hopes. The Witch has raiſed the Storm, and her Miniſters have done their Work; you ſee the Veſſels are parted.

Maſkw. I know it; I met Sir *Paul* towing away *Cynthia*. Come, trouble not your Head, I'll join you together ere To-morrow Morning, or drown between you in the Attempt.

Mell. There's Comfort in a Hand ſtretched out, to one that's ſinking; though ne'er ſo far off.

Maſkw. No Sinking, nor no Danger.—Come, chear up; why you don't know that, while I plead for you, your Aunt has given me a Retaining Fee.—Nay, I am

your greateſt Enemy, and ſhe does but journey-work under me.

Mell. Ha! How's this?

Maſkw. What d'ye think of my being employed in the Execution of all her Plots? Ha, ha, ha! by Heaven, it's true; I have undertaken to break the Match, I have undertaken to make your Uncle diſinherit you, to get you turned out of Doors; and to—and to—Ha, ha, ha! I can't tell you for laughing.—Oh, ſhe has opened her Heart to me—I am to turn you a grazing, and to—Ha, ha, ha! marry *Cynthia* myſelf; there's a Plot for you.

Mell. Ha! I ſee, I ſee my riſing Sun! Light breaks through Clouds upon me, and I ſhall live in Day.—O my *Maſkwell!* how ſhall I thank or praiſe thee? Thou haſt out-witted Women.—But tell me, how could'ſt thou thus get into her Confidence?—Ha! how? But was it her Contrivance, to perſuade my Lady *Plyant* to this extravagant Belief?

Maſkw. It was; and, to tell you the Truth, I encouraged it for your Diverſion: though it made you a little uneaſy for the preſent, yet the Reflection of it muſt needs be entertaining—I warrant, ſhe was very violent at firſt.

Mell. Ha, ha, ha! ay, ay, a very Fury; but I was moſt afraid of her Violence at laſt—If you had not come as you did, I don't know what ſhe might have attempted.

Maſkw. Ha, ha, ha! I know her Temper.—Well, you muſt know then, that all my Contrivances were but Bubbles; till at laſt I pretended to have been long ſecretly in Love with *Cynthia*—That did my Buſineſs; that convinced your Aunt, I might be truſted; ſince it was as much my Intereſt as hers to break the Match. Then, ſhe thought my Jealouſy might qualify me to aſſiſt her in her Revenge; and, in ſhort, in that Belief, told me the Secrets of her Heart. At length we made this Agreement—If I accompliſh her Deſigns

(as

(as I told you before) ſhe has engaged to put *Cynthia*, with all her Fortune, into my Power.

Mell. She is moſt gracious in her Favour.—Well, and, dear *Jack*, how haſt thou contrived?

Maſkw. I would not have you ſtay to hear it now; for I don't know but ſhe may come this Way; I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole Matter: be here in this Gallery an Hour hence; by that Time, I imagine, our Conſultation may be over.

Mell. I will; till then, Succeſs attend thee!

SCENE VIII.

MASKWELL *alone.*

Till then, Succeſs will attend me; for, when I meet you, I meet the only Obſtacle to my Fortune. —*Cynthia*, let thy Beauty gild my Crimes; and whatſoever I commit of Treachery or Deceit, ſhall be imputed to me as a Merit!—Treachery! what Treachery? Love cancels all the Bonds of Friendſhip, and ſets Men right upon their firſt Foundations.—Duty to Kings, Piety to Parents, Gratitude to Benefactors, and Fidelity to Friends, are different and particular Ties: But the Name of Rival cuts them all aſunder, and is a general Acquittance—Rival is equal; and Love, like Death, an univerſal Leveler of Mankind. Ha! But is there not ſuch a Thing as Honeſty? Yes, and whoſoever has it about him, bears an Enemy in his Breaſt: for your honeſt Man, as I take it, is that nice, ſcrupulous, conſcientious Perſon, who will cheat nobody but himſelf; ſuch another Coxcomb, as your wiſe Man, who is too hard for all the World, and will be made a Fool of by nobody, but himſelf! Ha, ha, ha! Well, for Wiſdom and Honeſty, give me Cunning and Hypocriſy: oh, 'tis ſuch a Pleaſure, to angle for fair-faced Fools! Then that hungry Gudgeon, Credulity, will bite at any thing!—Why, let me ſee, I have the ſame Face, the ſame Words and Accents,

when I ſpeak what I do think; and when I ſpeak what I do not think—the very ſame—and dear Diſſimulation is the only Art, not to be known from Nature.

Why will Mankind be Fools, and be deceiv'd?
And why are Friends and Lovers Oaths believ'd;
When each, who ſearches ſtrictly his own Mind,
May ſo much Fraud and Power of Baſeneſs find?

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Lord TOUCHWOOD, *and Lady* TOUCHWOOD.

Lady *Touchw.* MY Lord, can you blame my Brother *Plyant*, if he refuſe his Daughter upon this Provocation? The Contract's void, by this unheard-of Impiety.

Lord *Touchw.* I don't believe it true; he has better Principles—Pho! 'tis Nonſenſe. Come, come, I know my Lady *Plyant* has a large Eye, and would center every Thing in her own Circle; 'tis not the firſt Time ſhe has miſtaken Reſpect for Love, and made Sir *Paul* jealous of the Civility of an undeſigning Perſon, the better to beſpeak his Security in her unfeigned Pleaſures.

Lady *Touchw.* You cenſure hardly, my Lord; my Siſter's Honour is very well known.

Lord *Touchw.* Yes, I believe, I know ſome that have been familiarly acquainted with it! This is a little Trick, wrought by ſome pitiful Contriver, envious of my Nephew's Merit.

Lady

Lady *Touchw.* Nay, my Lord, it may be ſo, and I hope it will be found ſo: But that will require ſome Time; for, in ſuch a Caſe as this, Demonſtration is neceſſary.

Lord *Touchw.* There ſhould have been Demonſtration of the contrary too, before it had been believed.

Lady *Touchw.* So, I ſuppoſe, there was.

Lord *Touchw.* How? where? when?

Lady *Touchw.* That I can't tell; nay I don't ſay there was—I am willing to believe as favourably of my Nephew as I can.

Lord *Touchw.* I don't know that! [*Half aſide.*

Lady *Touchw.* How? don't you believe that, ſay you, my Lord?

Lord *Touchw.* No, I don't ſay ſo—I confeſs, I am troubled, to find you ſo cold in his Defence.

Lady *Touchw.* His Defence! Bleſs me, would you have me defend an ill Thing?

Lord *Touchw.* You believe it then?

Lady *Touchw.* I don't know; I am very unwilling to ſpeak my Thoughts in any Thing that may be to my Couſin's Diſadvantage; beſides, I find, my Lord, you are prepared to receive an ill Impreſſion from any Opinion of mine which is not conſenting with your own. But, ſince I am like to be ſuſpected in the End, and 'tis a Pain any longer to diſſemble, I own it to you; in ſhort, I do believe it; nay, and can believe any Thing worſe, if it were laid to his Charge—Don't aſk me my Reaſons, my Lord; for they are not fit to be told you.

Lord *Touchw.* I'm amazed; here muſt be ſomething more than ordinary in this! [*Aſide.*]—Not fit to be told me, Madam? You can have no Intereſts, wherein I am not concerned; and conſequently the ſame Reaſons ought to be convincing to me, which create your Satisfaction or Diſquiet.

Lady *Touchw.* But thoſe which cauſe my Diſquiet, I am willing to have remote from your Hearing.—Good my Lord, don't preſs me.

Lord *Touchw.* Don't oblige me to preſs you.

Lady *Touchw.* Whatever it was, 'tis paſt: and that is better to be unknown, which cannot be prevented; therefore let me beg you to reſt ſatisfied.

Lord *Touchw.* When you have told me, I will.

Lady *Touchw.* You won't.

Lord *Touchw.* By my Life, my Dear, I will.

Lady *Touchw.* What, if you can't?

Lord *Touchw.* How? Then I muſt know, nay I will: no more Trifling—I charge you, tell me—By all our mutual Peace to come; upon your Duty—

Lady *Touchw.* Nay, my Lord, you need ſay no more, to make me lay my Heart before you. But don't be thus tranſported; compoſe yourſelf. It is not of Concern, to make you loſe one Minute's Temper. 'Tis not indeed, my Dear. Nay, by this Kiſs, you ſhan't be angry. O Lord! I wiſh I had not told you any thing.—Indeed, my Lord, you have frighted me. Nay, look pleaſed; I'll tell you.

Lord *Touchw.* Well, well.

Lady *Touch.* Nay, but will you be calm?—indeed it's nothing but—

Lord *Touchw.* But what?

Lady *Touchw.* But will you promiſe me not to be angry?—Nay you muſt—Not to be angry with *Melleſont?*—I dare ſwear, he's ſorry—and were it to do again, would not—

Lord *Touchw.* Sorry, for what? Death! you rack me with Delay.

Lady *Touchw.* Nay, no great Matter; only—Well, I have your Promiſe—Pho! why nothing, only your Nephew had a Mind to amuſe himſelf ſometimes with a little Gallantry towards me. Nay, I can't think he meant any Thing ſeriouſly; but methought it looked oddly.

Lord

Lord *Touchw.* Confuſion and Hell! what do I hear!

Lady *Touchw.* Or, may be, he thought he was not enough akin to me upon your Account, and had a Mind to create a nearer Relation on his own; a Lover you know, my Lord—Ha, ha, ha! Well, but that's all—Now you have it: well, remember your Promiſe, my Lord; and don't take any Notice of it to him.

Lord *Touchw.* No, no, no—Damnation!

Lady *Touchw.* Nay, I ſwear you muſt not—A little harmleſs Mirth—only miſplaced, that's all—But if it were more, 'tis over now, and all is well. For my Part, I have forgot it; and ſo has he, I hope—for I have not heard any thing from him theſe two Days.

Lord *Touchw.* Theſe two Days! Is it ſo freſh? Unnatural Villain!—Death! I'll have him ſtript and turned naked out of my Doors this Moment, and let him rot and periſh—Inceſtuous Brute!

Lady *Touchw.* O, for Heaven's Sake, my Lord, you'll ruin me if you take ſuch public Notice of it; it will be a Town talk. Conſider your own and my Honour—nay, I told you you would not be ſatisfied when you knew it.

Lord *Touchw.* Before I've done, I will be ſatisfied. Ungrateful Monſter! how long—

Lady *Touchw.* Lord, I don't know: I wiſh my Lips had grown together when I told you—Almoſt a Twelvemonth—Nay, I won't tell you any more, till you are yourſelf. Pray, my Lord, don't let the Company ſee you in this Diſorder—Yet I confeſs, I can't blame you; for I think I was never ſo ſurprized in my Life—Who would have thought my Nephew could have ſo miſconſtrued my Kindneſs?—But will you go into your Cloſet, and recover your Temper? I'll make an Excuſe of ſudden Buſineſs to the Company, and come to you. Pray, good dear my Lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come immediately, and tell you all—will you, my Lord?

Lord *Touchw.* I will—I am mute with Wonder.

Lady *Touchw.* Well, but go now, here's ſomebody coming.

Lord *Touchw.* Well, I go—you won't ſtay, for I would hear more of this.

Lady *Touchw.* I follow inſtantly—So!

SCENE II.

Lady TOUCHWOOD, MASKWELL.

Maſkw. This was a Maſter-piece, and did not need my Help—though I ſtood ready for a Cue, to come in and confirm all, had there been Occaſion.

Lady *Touchw.* Have you ſeen *Melleſont?*

Maſkw. I have; and am to meet him here about this Time.

Lady *Touchw.* How does he bear his Diſappointment?

Maſkw. Secure in my Aſſiſtance, he ſeemed not much afflicted; but rather laughed at the ſhallow Artifice, which ſo little Time muſt of Neceſſity diſcover. Yet he is apprehenſive of ſome further Deſign of yours, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your Plot; yet I would have you uſe Caution and Expedition.

Lady *Touchw.* Expedition indeed; for all we do, muſt be performed in the remaining Part of this Evening, and before the Company break up; leſt my Lord ſhould cool, and have an Opportunity to talk with him privately.—My Lord muſt not ſee him again.

Maſkw. By no Means; therefore you muſt aggravate my Lord's Diſpleaſure to a Degree that will admit of no Conference with him.—What think you of mentioning me?

Lady *Touchw.* How?

Maſkw. To my Lord, as having been privy to *Melleſont's* Deſign upon you, but ſtill uſing my utmoſt Endeavours to diſſuade him; though my Friendſhip and

and Love to him has made me conceal it: yet you may ſay, I threatened, the next Time he attempted any Thing of that Kind, to diſcover it to my Lord.

Lady *Touchw.* To what End is this?

Maſkw. It will confirm my Lord's Opinion of my Honour and Honeſty, and create in him a new Confidence in me, which (ſhould this Deſign miſcarry) will be neceſſary to the forming another Plot that I have in my Head—to you, as well as the reſt!

[*Aſide.*

Lady *Touchw.* I'll do it—I'll tell him, you hindered him once from forcing me.

Maſkw. Excellent! Your Ladyſhip has a moſt improving Fancy. You had beſt go to my Lord, keep him as long as you can in his Cloſet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you pleaſe; your Gueſts are ſo engaged in their own Follies and Intrigues, they'll miſs neither of you.

Lady *Touchw.* When ſhall we meet?—At Eight this Evening, in my Chamber; there rejoice at our Succeſs, and toy away an Hour in Mirth.

Maſkw. I will not fail.

SCENE III.

MASKWELL *alone.*

I know what ſhe means by *toying away an Hour* well enough! Pox, I have loſt all Appetite to her; yet ſhe's a fine Woman, and I loved her once. But I don't know, ſince I have been in a great Meaſure kept by her, the Caſe is altered; what was my Pleaſure, is become my Duty: and I have as little Stomach to her now as if I were her Huſband. Should ſhe ſmoak my Deſign upon *Cynthia*, I were in a fine Pickle. She has a damned penetrating Head, and knows how to interpret a Coldneſs the right Way; therefore I muſt diſſemble Ardour and Ecſtaſy, that's reſolved. How eaſily and pleaſantly is that diſſembled before Fruition!

Pox on't, that a Man can't drink without quenching his Thirſt! Ha! yonder comes *Mellefont* thoughtful. Let me think—Meet her at Eight—hum—Ha! By Heaven, I have it—If I can ſpeak to my Lord before—Was it my Brain, or Providence? No Matter which—I will deceive them all, and yet ſecure myſelf: 'twas a lucky Thought! Well, this Double-dealing is a Jewel.—Here he comes: now for me!

[Maſkwell *pretending not to ſee him, walks by him, and ſpeaks as it were to himſelf.*

SCENE IV.

[*To him*] MELLEFONT, *muſing.*

Maſkw. Mercy on us! what will the Wickedneſs of this World come to?

Mell. How now, *Jack?* What, ſo full of Contemplation, that you run over!

Maſkw. I'm glad you're come, for I could not contain myſelf any longer: and was juſt going to give Vent to a Secret, which nobody but you ought to drink down.—Your Aunt's juſt gone from hence.

Mell. And, having truſted thee with the Secrets of her Soul, thou art villainouſly bent to diſcover them all to me, ha?

Maſkw. I'm afraid my Frailty leans that Way—but I don't know whether I can in Honour diſcover them all.

Mell. All, all, Man? What! you may in Honour betray her as far as ſhe betrays herſelf. No tragical Deſign upon my Perſon, I hope?

Maſkw. No, but it is a comical Deſign upon mine.

Mell. What doſt thou mean?

Maſkw. Liſten, and be dumb; we have been bargaining about the Rate of your Ruin—

Mell. Like any two Guardians to an Orphan Heireſs—Well.

Maſkw.

Maſkw. And whereas Pleaſure is generally paid with Miſchief, what Miſchief I do is to be paid with Pleaſure.

Mell. So, when you've ſwallowed the Potion, you ſweeten your Mouth with a Plumb.

Maſkw. You are merry, Sir; but I ſhall probe your Conſtitution. In ſhort, the Price of your Baniſhment is to be paid with the Perſon of—

Mell. Of *Cynthia*, and her Fortune—Why, you forget; you told me this before.

Maſkw. No, no—So far you are right; and I am, as an Earneſt of that Bargain, to have full and free Poſſeſſion of the Perſon of—your Aunt.

Mell. Ha!—Pho, you trifle.

Maſkw. By this Light, I'm ſerious; all Raillery apart—I knew 'twould ſtun you. This Evening, at Eight, ſhe will receive me in her Bed chamber.

Mell. Hell and the Devil! is ſhe abandoned of all Grace?—Why the Woman is poſſeſs'd—

Maſkw. Well, will you go in my Stead?

Mell. By Heaven, into a hot Furnace ſooner.

Maſkw. No, you would not—It would not be ſo convenient, as I can order Matters.

Mell. What d'ye mean!

Maſkw. Mean? Not to diſappoint the Lady, I aſſure you.—Ha, ha, ha! how gravely he looks—Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only Thing that Providence could have contrived, to make me capable of ſerving you, either to my Inclination, or your own Neceſſity.

Mell. How, how, for Heaven's ſake, dear *Maſkwell?*

Maſkw. Why thus—I'll go according to Appointment; you ſhall have Notice, at the critical Minute, to come and ſurprize your Aunt and me together: counterfeit a Rage againſt me, and I'll make my Eſcape through the private Paſſage from her Chamber, which I'll take care to leave open: 'twill be hard, if then

then you can't bring her to any Conditions; for this Diſcovery will diſarm her of all Defence, and leave her entirely at your Mercy; nay, ſhe muſt ever after be in Awe of you.

Mell. Let me adore thee, my better *Genius!* By Heaven, I think it is not in the Power of Fate to diſappoint my Hopes—My Hopes? my Certainty.

Maſkw. Well, I'll meet you here, within a Quarter of Eight, and give you Notice.

Mell. Good Fortune ever go along with thee!

SCENE V.

MELLEFONT, CARELESS.

Carel. *Mellefont*, get out o'th' Way; my Lady *Plyant* is coming, and I ſhall never ſucceed while thou art in Sight—though ſhe begins to tack about; but I made Love a great while to no Purpoſe.

Mell. Why, what's the Matter? She's convinced that I don't care for her.

Carel. I cannot get an Anſwer from her, that does not begin with her Honour, or her Virtue, her Religion, or ſome ſuch Cant. Then ſhe has told me the whole Hiſtory of Sir *Paul's* Nine Years Courtſhip; how he has lain for whole Nights together upon the Stairs, before her Chamber-door; and that the firſt Favour he received from her, was a Piece of an old Scarlet Petticoat for a Stomacher; which, ſince the Day of his Marriage, he has, out of a Piece of Gallantry, converted into a Night-cap, and wears it ſtill with much Solemnity on his Anniverſary Wedding Night.

Mell. That I have ſeen, with the Ceremony thereunto belonging—for on that Night he creeps in at the Bed's Feet like a gulled Baſſa that has married a Relation of the *Grand Signior*; and that Night he has his Arms at Liberty. Did not ſhe tell you at what a Diſtance ſhe keeps him? He has confeſſed to me, that but at ſome certain Times—that is, I ſuppoſe, when

ſhe

ſhe apprehends being with Child—he never has the Privilege of uſing the Familiarity of a Huſband with a Wife. He was once given to ſcrambling with his Hands, and ſprawling in his Sleep; and ever ſince ſhe has him ſwaddled up in Blankets, and his Hands and Feet ſwathed down, and ſo put to Bed; and there he lies, with a great Beard, like a *Ruſſian* Bear upon a Drift of Snow. You are very great with him; I wonder he never told you his Grievances; he will, I warrant you.

Carel. Exceſſively fooliſh!—but that which gives me moſt Hopes of her, is her telling me of the many Temptations ſhe has reſiſted.

Mell. Nay, then you have her; for a Woman's bragging to a Man that ſhe has overcome Temptations, is an Argument that they were weakly offered, and a Challenge to him to engage her more irreſiſtibly. 'Tis only an enhancing the Price of the Commodity, by telling you how many Cuſtomers have underbid her.

Carel. Nay, I don't deſpair—But ſtill ſhe has a Grudging to you—I talked to her t'other Night at my Lord *Froth's* Maſquerade, when I'm ſatisfied ſhe knew me, and I had no Reaſon to complain of my Reception; but I find Women are not the ſame bare-faced and in Maſks—and a Vizor diſguiſes their Inclinations as much as their Faces.

Mell. 'Tis a Miſtake, for Women may moſt properly be ſaid to be unmaſked when they wear Vizors; for that ſecures them from Bluſhing and being out of Countenance; and, next to being in the Dark, or alone, they are moſt truly themſelves in a Vizor Maſk.—Here they come, I'll leave you. Ply her cloſe, and by and by clap a *Billet doux* into her Hand; for a Woman never thinks a Man truly in Love with her, till he has been Fool enough to think of her out of her Sight, and to loſe ſo much Time as to write to her.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

CARELESS, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, *and Lady* PLYANT.

Sir *Paul Plyant*. Shan't we diſturb your Meditation, Mr. *Careleſs*? You would be private.

Carel. You bring that along with you, Sir *Paul*, that ſhall be always welcome to my Privacy.

Sir *P. Pl.* O, ſweet Sir, you load your humble Servants, both me and my Wife, with continual Favours.

Lady *Pl.* Sir *Paul*, what a Phraſe was there! You will be making Anſwers, and taking that upon you, which ought to lie upon me. That you ſhould have ſo little Breeding to think Mr. *Careleſs* did not apply himſelf to me! Pray what have you to entertain any body's Privacy? I ſwear and declare, in the Face of the World, I'm ready to bluſh for your Ignorance.

Sir *P. Pl.* I acquieſce, my Lady; but don't ſhub ſo loud! [*Aſide to her.*

Lady *Pl.* Mr. *Careleſs*, if a Perſon that is wholly illiterate might be ſuppoſed to be capable of being qualified to make a ſuitable Return to thoſe Obligations which you are pleaſed to confer upon one that is wholly incapable of being qualified in all thoſe Circumſtances, I'm ſure I ſhould rather attempt it than any Thing in the World [*curteſies*]—for I am ſure there is nothing in the World that I would rather [*curteſies*]—But I know Mr. *Careleſs* is ſo great a Critic, and ſo fine a Gentleman, that it is impoſſible for me—

Carel. O Heavens! Madam, you confound me.

Sir *P. Pl.* Gads bud! ſhe is a fine Perſon!

Lady *Pl.* O Lord! Sir, pardon me, we Women have not thoſe Advantages; I know my own Imperfections—But, at the ſame Time, you muſt give me Leave to declare, in the Face of the World, that nobody is more ſenſible of Favours and Things; for, with the

the Reſerve of my Honour, I aſſure you, Mr. *Careleſs*, I don't know any Thing in the World I would refuſe to a Perſon ſo meritorious—You'll pardon my Want of Expreſſion.

Carel. O! your Ladyſhip is abounding in all Excellence, particularly that of Phraſe.

Lady *Pl.* You are ſo obliging, Sir.

Carel. Your Ladyſhip is ſo charming.

Sir *P. Pl.* So, now, now; now, my Lady.

Lady *Pl.* So well bred.

Carel. So ſurprizing.

Lady *Pl.* So well dreſt, ſo *bonne mine*, ſo eloquent, ſo unaffected, ſo eaſy, ſo free, ſo particular, ſo agreeable—

Sir *P. Pl.* Ay, ſo, ſo, there.

Carel. O Lord, I beſeech you, Madam, don't—

Lady *Pl.* So gay, ſo graceful, ſo good Teeth, ſo fine Shape, ſo fine Limbs, ſo fine Linen; and I don't doubt but you have a very good Skin, Sir.

Carel. For Heaven's ſake, Madam—I'm quite out of Countenance.

Sir *P. Pl.* And my Lady is quite out of Breath; or elſe you ſhould hear—Gad's bud! you may talk of my Lady *Froth!*

Carel. O fie, fie, not to be named of a Day—My Lady *Froth* is very well in her Accompliſhments—but it is when my Lady *Plyant* is not thought of—if that can ever be.

Lady *Pl.* O you overcome me!—that is ſo exceſſive.

Sir *P. Pl.* Nay, I ſwear and vow, that was pretty.

Carel. O, Sir *Paul*, you are the happieſt Man alive. Such a Lady! that is the Envy of her own Sex, and the Admiration of ours.

Sir *P. Pl.* Your humble Servant!—I am, I thank Heaven, in a fine Way of living, as I may ſay, peacefully and happily; and, I think, need not envy any of my Neighbours, bleſſed be Providence!—Ay truly,

Mr.

Mr. *Careleſs*, my Lady is a great Bleſſing; a fine, diſcreet, well-ſpoken Woman as you ſhall ſee—if it becomes me to ſay ſo; and we live very comfortably together; ſhe is a little haſty ſometimes, and ſo am I; but mine's ſoon over, and then I'm ſo ſorry—O, Mr. *Careleſs*, if it were not for one Thing—

SCENE VII.

CARELESS, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, *Lady* PLYANT, *Boy with a Letter.*

Lady *Pl.* How often have you been told of that, you Jackanapes?

Sir *P. Pl.* Gad ſo, gad's-bud!—*Tim*, carry it to my Lady; you ſhould have carried it to my Lady firſt.

Boy. 'Tis directed to your Worſhip.

Sir *P. Pl.* Well, well, my Lady reads all Letters firſt—Child, do ſo no more; d'ye hear, *Tim.*

Boy. No, an't pleaſe you!

SCENE VIII.

CARELESS, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, *Lady* PLYANT.

Sir *P. Pl.* A Humour of my Wife's; you know Women have little Fancies—But, as I was telling you, Mr. *Careleſs*, if it were not for one Thing, I ſhould think myſelf the happieſt Man in the World; indeed that touches me near, very near!

Carel. What can that be, Sir *Paul?*

Sir *P. Pl.* Why, I have, I thank Heaven, a very plentiful Fortune, a good Eſtate in the Country, ſome Houſes in Town, and ſome Money, a pretty tolerable Perſonal Eſtate; and it is a great Grief to me, indeed it is, Mr. *Careleſs*, that I have not a Son to inherit this.—'Tis true, I have a Daughter; and a fine dutiful Child ſhe is, though I ſay it, bleſſed be Providence, I may ſay; for indeed, Mr. *Careleſs*, I am mightily beholden to Providence—a poor unworthy Sinner—

Sinner—But if I had a Son, ah, that's my Affliction, and my only Affliction; indeed I cannot refrain Tears when it comes in my Mind. [*Cries.*

Carel. Why, methinks that might be eaſily remedied—my Lady's a fine likely Woman—

Sir *P. Pl.* Oh, a fine likely Woman as you ſhall ſee in a Summer's Day!—Indeed ſhe is, Mr. *Careleſs*, in all reſpects.

Carel. And I ſhould not have taken you to have been ſo old—

Sir *P. Pl.* Alas, that's not it, Mr. *Careleſs*; ah! that's not it; no, no, you ſhoot wide of the Mark a Mile, indeed you do; that's not it, Mr. *Careleſs*; no, no, that's not it.

Carel. No? what can be the Matter then?

Sir *P. Pl.* You'll ſcarcely believe me, when I ſhall tell you—my Lady is ſo nice—it is very ſtrange, but it is true, too true—ſhe is ſo very nice, that I don't believe ſhe would touch a Man for the World—at leaſt not above once a Year; I'm ſure I have found it ſo; and alas, what is once a Year to an old Man, who would do good in his Generation? Indeed it's true, Mr. *Careleſs*, it breaks my Heart!—I am her Huſband, as I may ſay; though far unworthy of that Honour; yet I am her Huſband; but alas-a-day, I have no more Familiarity with her Perſon—as to that Matter—than with my own Mother—no indeed!

Carel. Alas-a-day, this is a lamentable Story; my Lady muſt be told on't; ſhe muſt, i'faith, Sir *Paul*; 'tis an Injury to the World.

Sir *P. Pl.* Ah! would to Heaven you would, Mr. *Careleſs*; you are mightily in her Favour.

Carel. I warrant you; what, we muſt have a Son ſome Way or other.

Sir *P. Pl.* Indeed, I ſhould be mightily bound to you, if you could bring it about, Mr. *Careleſs*.

Lady

Lady *Pl.* Here, Sir *Paul*, it's from your Steward, here's a Return of Six Hundred Pounds; you may take Fifty of it for the next half Year.

[*Gives him the Letter.*

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] *Lord* FROTH, CYNTHIA.

Sir *P. Pl.* How does my Girl? come hither to thy Father—poor Lamb! thour't melancholic.

Lord *Froth.* Heaven! Sir *Paul!* you amaze me, of all things in the World—You are never pleased but when we are all upon the broad Grin; all Laugh, and no Company; ah, then 'tis such a Sight to see some Teeth—Sure you're a great Admirer of my Lady *Whisper*, Mr. *Sneer*, and Sir *Laurence Loud*, and that Gang.

Sir *P. Pl.* I vow and swear, she's a very merry Woman; but I think she laughs a little too much.

Lord *Froth.* Merry! O Lord, what a Character that is of a Woman of Quality.—You have been at my Lady *Whisper's* upon her Day, Madam?

Cynth. Yes, my Lord.—I must humour this Fool!

[*Aside.*

Lord *Froth.* Well and how? hee! What is your Sense of the Conversation?

Cynth. O, most ridiculous! a perpetual Concert of Laughing, without any Harmony; for sure, my Lord, to laugh out of Time is as disagreeable as to sing out of Time, or out of Tune.

Lord *Froth.* Hee, hee, hee! right; and then, my Lady *Whisper* is so ready—she always comes in three Bars too soon—And then, what do they laugh at? for you know laughing without a Jest is as impertinent—hee! as, as—

Cynth. As dancing without a Fiddle.

Lord *Froth.* Just, i'faith: that was at my Tongue's End.

Cynth.

Cynth. But that cannot be properly ſaid of them, for I think they are all in Good-nature with the World, and only laugh at one another; and you muſt allow they have all Jeſts in their Perſons, though they have none in their Converſation.

Lord *Froth.* True, as I'm a Perſon of Honour—For Heav'ns ſake, let us ſacrifice them to Mirth a little. [*Enter Boy, and whiſpers Sir* Paul.

Sir *P. Pl.* Gads ſo!—Wife, Wife, my Lady *Plyant*, I have a Word.

Lady *Pl.* I'm buſy, Sir *Paul*; I wonder at your Impertinence—

Carel. Sir *Paul*, harkye, I am reaſoning the Matter, you know—Madam, if your Ladyſhip pleaſe, we will diſcourſe of this in the next Room.

Sir *P. Pl.* O ho, I wiſh you good Succeſs; I wiſh you good Succeſs. Boy, tell my Lady, when ſhe has done, I would ſpeak with her below.

SCENE X.

CYNTHIA, *Lord* FROTH, *Lady* FROTH, BRISK.

Lady *Froth.* Then you think that *Epiſode* between *Suſan* the Dairy-maid and our Coach-man is not amiſs? You know, I may ſuppoſe the Dairy in Town, as well as in the Country.

Briſk. Incomparable, let me periſh!—But then, being an Heroic Poem, had not you better call him a *Charioteer*? *Charioteer* ſounds great, beſides, your Ladyſhip's Coachman having a red Face, and you comparing him to the Sun—and you know the Sun is called *Heaven's Charioteer.*

Lady *Froth.* Oh, infinitely better; I'm extreamly beholden to you for the Hint; ſtay, we'll read over thoſe half a Score Lines again. [*Pull out a Paper.*] Let me ſee here, you know what goes before—the Compariſon, you know,

Reads.] *For, as the Sun ſhines every Day;*

So, of our Coachman I may ſay— *Briſk.*

Briſk. I'm afraid that Simile won't do in wet Weather—becauſe you ſay the Sun ſhines every Day.

Lady *Froth.* No, for the Sun it won't; but it will do for the Coachman, for you know there's moſt Occaſion for a Coach in wet Weather.

Briſk. Right, right; that ſaves all.

Lady *Froth.* Then I don't ſay the Sun ſhines all the Day, but that he peeps now and then; yet he does ſhine all the Day too, you know, though we don't ſee him.

Briſk. Right; but the Vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady *Froth.* Well, you ſhall hear—Let me ſee. Reads] *For, as the Sun ſhines every Day,*
So, of our Coachman I may ſay,
He ſhews his drunken, fiery Face,
Juſt as the Sun does, more or leſs.

Briſk. That's right, all's well—*more or leſs.*

Lady *Froth* reads.

And when at Night his Labour's done,
Then too, like Heaven's Charioteer the Sun:

Ay, *Charioteer* does better!

Into the Dairy he deſcends,
And there his Whipping and his Driving ends;
There he's ſecure from Danger of a Bilk,
His Fare is paid him, and he ſits in Milk.

For *Suſan*, you know, is *Thetis*; and ſo—

Briſk. Incomparably well and proper, egad—But I have one Exception to make—Don't you think *Bilk* (I know it's good Rhime) but don't you think *Bilk* and *Fare* too like a Hackney Coach-man?

Lady *Froth.* I ſwear and vow, I'm afraid ſo—And yet our *Jehu* was a Hackney Coach-man, when my Lord took him.

Briſk. Was he? I'm anſwered, if *Jehu* was a Hackney Coach-man.—You may put that in the marginal Notes though, to prevent Criticiſm—only mark it with

with a ſmall Aſteriſm, and ſay, "*Jehu* was formerly a "Hackney Coach-man."

Lady *Froth.* I will; you'd oblige me extremely, to write Notes to the whole Poem.

Briſk. With all my Heart and Soul, and proud of the vaſt Honour, let me periſh!

Lord *Froth.* Hee, hee, hee! my Dear, have you done?—Won't you join with us? We were laughing at my Lady *Whiſper* and Mr. *Sneer.*

Lady *Froth.* Ay, my Dear—were you? Oh filthy Mr. *Sneer!* he's a nauſeous Figure, a moſt fulſamic Fop, foh!—He ſpent two Days together in going about *Covent-Garden*, to ſuit the Lining of his Coach with his Complexion.

Lord *Froth.* O filly! yet his Aunt is as fond of him, as if ſhe had brought the Ape into the World herſelf.

Briſk. Who, my Lady *Toothleſs?* O, ſhe's a mortifying Spectacle; ſhe's always chewing the Cud, like an old *Yew.*

Cynth. Fie, Mr. *Briſk! Eringo* is for her Cough.

Lady *Froth.* I have ſeen her take them half chewed out of her Mouth, to laugh, and then put them in again—Foh!

Lord *Froth.* Foh!

Lady *Froth.* Then ſhe's always ready to laugh, when *Sneer* offers to ſpeak—and ſits in Expectation of his No-Jeſt, with her Gums bare, and her Mouth open—

Briſk. Like an Oyſter at low Ebb, egad—ha, ha, ha!

Cynth. [*Aſide.*] Well, I find there are no Fools ſo inconſiderable in themſelves, but they can render other People contemptible by expoſing their Infirmities!

Lady *Froth.* Then that t'other great ſtrapping Lady—I can't hit of her Name; the old fat Fool, that paints ſo exorbitantly.

Briſk. I know whom you mean—But, deuce take me, I can't hit of her Name neither—Paints, d'ye ſay? Why

Why ſhe lays it on with a Trowel—Then ſhe has a great Beard, that briſtles through it, and makes her look as if ſhe were plaiſtered with Lime and Hair, let me periſh.

Lady *Froth*. Oh, you made a Song upon her, Mr. *Briſk*.

Briſk. He! egad, ſo I did—My Lord can ſing it.

Cynth. O good my Lord, let's hear it.

Briſk. 'Tis not a Song neither—It's a ſort of Epigram, or rather an Epigrammatic Sonnet; I don't know what to call it, but it's Satire.—Sing it, my Lord.

Lord *Froth* ſings.

Ancient Phyllis *has young Graces,*
'Tis a ſtrange Thing, but a true one;
Shall I tell you how?
She herſelf makes her own Faces,
And each Morning wears a new one;
Where's the Wonder now?

Briſk. Short, but there's Salt in't; my way of Writing, egad.

SCENE XI.

[*To them*] FOOTMAN.

Lady *Froth*. How now?

Footm. Your Ladyſhip's Chair is come.

Lady *Froth*. Is Nurſe and the Child in it?

Footm. Yes, Madam.

Lady *Froth*. O the dear Creature! let's go ſee it.

Lord *Froth*. I ſwear, my Dear, you'll ſpoil that Child, with ſending it to and again ſo often; this is the Seventh Time the Chair has gone for her To-day.

Lady *Froth*. O law! I ſwear it is but the Sixth—and I han't ſeen her theſe two Hours.—The poor dear Creature!—I ſwear, my Lord, you don't love poor little *Sappho*.—Come, my dear *Cynthia*, Mr. *Briſk*, we'll go ſee *Sappho*, though my Lord won't.

Cynth. I'll wait upon your Ladyſhip.

Briſk. Pray, Madam, how old is Lady *Sappho?*

Lady *Froth.* Three Quarters; but I ſwear ſhe has a World of Wit, and can ſing a Tune already. My Lord, won't you go? won't you? What, not to ſee *Saph?* Pray, my Lord, come ſee little *Saph.* I knew you could not ſtay.

SCENE XII.

CYNTHIA, *alone.*

'Tis not ſo hard to counterfeit Joy in the Depth of Affliction, as to diſſemble Mirth in Company of Fools!—Why ſhould I call them Fools? The World thinks better of them; for theſe have Quality and Education, Wit, and fine Converſation, are received and admired by the World—if not, they like and admire themſelves!—And why is not that true Wiſdom? for 'tis Happineſs; and, for aught I know, we have miſapplied the Name all this while, and miſtaken the Thing: ſince

If Happineſs in Self-content is plac'd,
The Wiſe are wretched, and Fools only bleſs'd.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

MELLEFONT, CYNTHIA.

Cynth. I Heard him loud as I came by the Cloſet-door, and my Lady with him; but ſhe ſeemed to moderate his Paſſion.

Mell. Ay, (Hell thank her!) as gentle Breezes moderate a Fire; but I ſhall counter-work her Spells, and ride the Witch in her own Bridle.

Cynth. It is impoſſible; ſhe'll caſt beyond you ſtill—I'll lay my Life, it will never be a Match.

Mell. What?

Cynth. Between you and me.

Mell. Why ſo?

Cynth. My Mind gives me it won't—becauſe we are both willing; we each of us ſtrive to reach the Goal, and hinder one another in the Race; I ſwear, it never does well, when the Parties are ſo agreed—for when People walk Hand in Hand, there's neither overtaking nor meeting. We hunt in Couples, where we both purſue the ſame Game, but forget one another; and 'tis becauſe we are ſo near, that we don't think of coming together.

Mell. Hum! egad, I believe there's ſomething in it—Marriage is the Game that we hunt; and while we think that we only have it in View, I don't ſee but we have it in our Power.

Cynth. Within Reach; for Example, give me your Hand. You have looked through the wrong End of the Perſpective all this while; for nothing has been between us but our Fears.

Mell.

Mell. I don't know why we ſhould not ſteal out of the Houſe this very Moment, and marry one another, without Conſideration, or the Fear of Repentance. Pox on Fortune, Portion, Settlements, and Jointures!

Cynth. Ay, ay, what have we to do with them? you know, we marry for Love.

Mell. Love, Love, down-right very villainous Love.

Cynth. And he that can't live upon Love, deſerves to die in a Ditch.—Here then I give you my Promiſe, in ſpight of Duty, any Temptation of Wealth, your Inconſtancy, or my own Inclination to change—

Mell. To run moſt willfully and unreaſonably away with me this Moment, and be married.

Cynth. Hold—Never to marry any body elſe.

Mell. That's but a Kind of negative Conſent—Why, you won't baulk the Frolick?

Cynth. If you had not been ſo aſſured of your own Conduct, I would not—But 'tis but reaſonable that, ſince I conſent to like a Man without the vile Conſideration of Money, he ſhould give me a very evident Demonſtration of his Wit. Therefore let me ſee you undermine my Lady *Touchwood*, as you boaſted, and force her to give her Conſent, and then—

Mell. I'll do't.

Cynth. And I'll do't.

Mell. This very next enſuing Hour of Eight a Clock is the laſt Minute of her Reign, unleſs the Devil aſſiſt her *in propria Perſona*.

Cynth. Well, if the Devil ſhould aſſiſt her, and your Plot miſcarry—

Mell. Ay, what am I to truſt to then?

Cynth. Why, if you give me very clear Demonſtration that it was the Devil, I'll allow for irreſiſtible odds. But if I find it to be only Chance, or Deſtiny, or unlucky Stars, or any thing but the very Devil, I'm inexorable. Only ſtill I'll keep my Word, and live a Maid for your ſake.

Mell. And you won't die one, for your own; ſo ſtill there's Hope.

Cynth. Here's my Mother-in-Law, and your Friend *Careleſs*; I would not have them ſee us together yet.

SCENE II.

CARELESS *and Lady* PLYANT.

Lady *Pl.* I ſwear, Mr. *Careleſs*, you are very alluring—and ſay ſo many fine Things, and nothing is ſo moving to me as a fine Thing. Well, I muſt do you this Juſtice, and declare in the Face of the World, never any body gained ſo far upon me as yourſelf; with Bluſhes I muſt own it, you have ſhaken, as I may ſay, the very Foundation of my Honour—Well, ſure, if I eſcape your Importunities, I ſhall value myſelf as long as I live, I ſwear.

Carel. And deſpiſe me! [*Sighing.*

Lady *Pl.* The laſt of any Man in the World, by my Purity; now you make me ſwear,—O Gratitude, forbid! that I ſhould ever be wanting in a reſpectful Acknowledgment of an entire Reſignation of all my beſt Wiſhes; for the Perſon and Parts of ſo accompliſhed a Perſon, whoſe Merit challenges much more, I am ſure, than my illiterate Praiſes can deſcription—

Carel. [*In a whining Tone.*] Ah, Heavens! Madam, you ruin me with Kindneſs; your charming Tongue purſues the Victory of your Eyes, while at your Feet your poor Adorer dies.

Lady *Pl.* Ah! very fine!

Carel. [*ſtill whining.*] Ah! why are you ſo fair, ſo bewitching fair? O, let me grow to the Ground here, and feaſt upon that Hand! O, let me preſs it to my Heart, my trembling Heart; the nimble Movement ſhall inſtruct your Pulſe, and teach it to alarm Deſire.—Zoons, I am almoſt at the End of my Cant, if ſhe does not yield quickly! [*Aſide.*

Lady

Lady *Pl.* O that's ſo paſſionate and fine, I cannot hear it—I am not ſafe if I ſtay, and muſt leave you.

Carel. And muſt you leave me? Rather let me languiſh out a wretched Life, and breathe my Soul beneath your Feet.—I muſt ſay the ſame Thing over again, and cannot help it. [*Aſide.*

Lady *Pl.* I ſwear, I am ready to languiſh too—O my Honour! whither is it going? I proteſt, you have given me the Palpitation of the Heart.

Carel. Can you be ſo cruel?

Lady *Pl.* O riſe, I beſeech you, ſay no more till you riſe—Why did you kneel ſo long? I ſwear, I was ſo tranſported, I did not ſee it.—Well, to ſhew you how far you have gained upon me; I aſſure you, if Sir *Paul* ſhould die—of all Mankind, there's none I'd ſooner make my ſecond Choice.

Carel. O Heaven! I can't out live this Night without your Favour!—I feel my Spirits faint, a general Dampneſs over-ſpreads my Face, a cold deadly Dew already vents through all my Pores, and will Tomorrow waſh me for ever from your Sight, and drown me in my Tomb.

Lady *Pl.* O you have conquered! ſweet, melting, moving Sir, you have conquered!—What Heart of Marble can refrain to weep, and yield to ſuch ſad Sayings? [*Cries.*

Carel. [*Aſide.*] I thank Heaven, they are the ſaddeſt that I ever ſaid—Oh!—I ſhall never contain Laughter!

Lady *Pl.* Oh, I yield myſelf all up to your uncontroulable Embraces!—Say, thou dear, dying Man, when, where, and how?—Ah! there's Sir *Paul!*

Carel. 'Slife, yonder's Sir *Paul*; but, if he were not come, I'm ſo tranſported I cannot ſpeak—This Note will inform you. [*Gives her a Note.*

SCENE III.

Lady PLYANT, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, CYNTHIA.

Sir *P. Pl.* Thou art my tender Lambkin, and shalt do what thou wilt!—But endeavour to forget this *Mellefont.*

Cynth. I would obey you to my Power, Sir; but, if I have not him, I have sworn never to marry.

Sir *P. Pl.* Never to marry! Heavens forbid! must I neither have Sons nor Grandsons? must the Family of the *Plyants* be utterly extinct, for Want of Issue Male. Oh Impiety! But did you swear, did that sweet Creature swear? ha! How durst you swear without my Consent, ha? Gads-bud! who am I?

Cynth. Pray, don't be angry, Sir; when I swore, I had your Consent; and therefore I swore.

Sir *P. Pl.* Why then the revoking my Consent does annul, or make of none Effect, your Oath, so you may answer it again—The Law will allow it.

Cynth. Ay, but my Conscience never will.

Sir *P. Pl.* Gads-bud! no matter for that: Conscience and Law never go together; you must not expect that.

Lady *Pl.* Ay, but, Sir *Paul*, I conceive, if she has sworn, d'ye mark me, if she has once sworn, it is most unchristian, inhuman, and obscene, that she should break it.—I'll make up the Match again, because Mr. *Careless* said it would oblige him. [*Aside.*

Sir *P. Pl.* Does your Ladyship conceive so?—Why, I was of that Opinion once too.—Nay, if your Ladyship conceives so, I'm of that Opinion again; but I can neither find my Lord nor my Lady, to know what they intend.

Lady *Pl.* I am satisfied that my Cousin *Mellefont* has been much wronged.

Cynth. [*Aside.*] I am amazed to find her of our Side, for I am sure she loved him.

Lady

Lady *Pl.* I know my Lady *Touchwood* has no Kindneſs for him; and beſides I have been informed by Mr. *Careleſs*, that *Melleſont* had never any thing more than a profound Reſpect—That he has owned himſelf to be my Admirer, 'tis true; but he was never ſo preſumptuous to entertain any diſhonourable Notions of Things; ſo that if this be made plain—I don't ſee how my Daughter can in Conſcience, or Honour, or any thing in the World—

Sir *P. Pl.* Indeed, if this be made plain, as my Lady your Mother ſays, Child—

Lady *Pl.* Plain! I was informed of it by Mr. *Careleſs*—and, I aſſure you, Mr. *Careleſs* is a Perſon—that has a moſt extraordinary Reſpect and Honour for you, Sir *Paul.*

Cynth. [*Aſide.*] And for your Ladyſhip too, I believe, or elſe you had not changed Sides ſo ſoon—now I begin to find it.

Sir *P. Pl.* I am much obliged to Mr. *Careleſs*, really; he is a Perſon that I have a great Value for—not only for that, but becauſe he has a great Veneration for your Ladyſhip.

Lady *P.* O las! no indeed, Sir *Paul*, 'tis upon your Account.

Sir *P. Pl.* No, I proteſt and vow, I have no Title to his Eſteem, but in having the Honour to appertain in ſome Meaſure to your Ladyſhip; that's all.

Lady *Pl.* O law now, I ſwear and declare, it ſhan't be ſo; you're too modeſt, Sir *Paul.*

Sir *P. Pl.* It becomes me, when there is any Compariſon made between—

Lady *Pl.* O fy, fy, Sir *Paul!* you'll put me out of Countenance—Your very obedient and affectionate Wife; that's all—and highly honoured in that Title.

Sir *P. Pl.* Gads-bud, I am tranſported! Give me leave to kiſs your Ladyſhip's Hand.

Cynth. That my poor Father ſhould be ſo very ſilly! [*Aſide.*

Lady *Pl.* My Lip indeed, Sir *Paul*; I ſwear, you ſhall. [*He kiſſes her, and bows very low.*

Sir *P. Pl.* I humbly thank your Ladyſhip.—I don't know whether I fly on Ground, or walk in Air—Gads-bud, ſhe was never thus before—well, I muſt own myſelf the moſt beholden to Mr. *Careleſs*—as ſure as can be, this is all his doing—ſomething that he has ſaid; well, 'tis a rare Thing to have an ingenious Friend. Well, your Ladyſhip is of Opinion that the Match may go forward?

Lady *Pl.* By all Means—Mr. *Careleſs* has ſatisfied me of the Matter.

Sir *P. Pl.* Well, why then, Lamb, you may keep your Oath; but have a Care of making raſh Vows, come hither to me, and kiſs Papa.

Lady *Pl.* I ſwear and declare, I am in ſuch a twitter to read Mr. *Careleſs*'s Letter, that I can't forbear any longer—But, though I may read all Letters firſt by Prerogative, yet I'll be ſure to be unſuſpected this Time.—Sir *Paul.*

Sir *P. Pl.* Did your Ladyſhip call?

Lady *Pl.* Nay, not to interrupt you, my Dear—Only lend me your Letter, which you had from your Steward To-day: I would look upon the Account again; and, may be, increaſe your Allowance.

Sir *P. Pl.* There it is, Madam. Do you want a Pen and Ink? [*Bows, and gives the Letter.*

Lady *Pl.* No, no, nothing elſe, I thank you, Sir *Paul.*—So, now I can read my own Letter under the Cover of his. [*Aſide.*

Sir *P. Pl.* He? And wilt thou bring a Grandſon at nine Months end—he? a brave chopping Boy?—I'll ſettle a Thouſand Pounds a Year upon the Rogue as ſoon as ever he looks me in the Face; I will, Gads-bud, I'm overjoyed to think I have any of my Family that will bring Children into the World; for I would fain have ſome Reſemblance of myſelf in my Poſterity; he! *Thy?* Can't you contrive that Affair, Girl?

Girl? Do, Gads-bud! think on thy old Father; heh? make the young Rogue as like as you can.

Cynth. I'm glad to ſee you ſo merry, Sir.

Sir P. Pl. Merry! Gads-bud, I'm ſerious, I'll give thee Five Hundred Pounds for every Inch of him that reſembles me. Ah this Eye, this left Eye! a Thouſand Pounds for this left Eye. This has done Execution in its Time, Girl—why thou haſt my Leer, Huſſey, juſt thy Father's Leer.—Let it be tranſmitted to the young Rogue, by the Help of Imagination; why 'tis the Mark of our Family, *Thy*, our Houſe is diſtinguiſhed by a languiſhing Eye, as the Houſe of *Auſtria* is by a thick Lip.—Ah! when I was of your Age, Huſſey, I would have held fifty to one, I could have drawn my own Picture.—Gads-bud, I could have done—not ſo much as you neither—but—nay, don't bluſh—

Cynth. I don't bluſh, Sir; for, I vow, I don't underſtand—

Sir P. Pl. Pſhaw, pſhaw, you fib, you Baggage, you do underſtand, and you ſhall underſtand; come, don't be ſo nice; Gads-bud, don't learn after your Mother-in-Law my Lady here: Marry, Heaven forbid that you ſhould follow her Example! that would ſpoil all indeed. Bleſs us, if you ſhould take a Vagary, and make a raſh Reſolution on your Wedding-night, to die a Maid, as ſhe did; all were ruined; all my Hopes loſt.—My Heart would break, and my Eſtate would be left to the wide Word, he? I hope you are a better Chriſtian than to think of living a Nun; he? Anſwer me.

Cynth. I'm all Obedience, Sir, to your Commands.

Lady *Pl.* [*Having read the Letter.*] O dear Mr. *Careleſs!* I ſwear, he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charmed me as much as I have charmed him; and ſo I'll tell him in the Wardrobe, which 'tis dark. *O Crimine!* I hope Sir *Paul* has not

ſeen both Letters. [*Puts the Letter haſtily up, and gives him her own.*]—Sir *Paul*, here's your Letter; To-morrow Morning I'll ſettle Accompts to your Advantage.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] BRISK.

Briſk. Sir *Paul*, Gads-bad you're an uncivil Perſon, let me tell you, and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir *P. Pl.* O Law! what's the Matter now? I hope you are not angry, Mr. *Briſk*.

Briſk. Deuce take me, I believe you intend to marry your Daughter yourſelf; you're always brooding over her like an old Hen, as if ſhe were not well hatched, egad, he?

Sir *P. Pl.* Good, ſtrange; Mr. *Briſk* is ſuch a merry, facetious Perſon, he, he, he! No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Briſk. The Fiddles have ſtayed this Hour in the Hall, and my Lord *Froth* wants a Partner; we can never begin without her.

Sir *P. Pl.* Go, go, Child, go; get you gone, and dance, and be merry; I'll come and look at you by and by.—Where's my Son *Mellefont*?

Lady *Pl.* I'll ſend him to them: I know where he is.

Briſk. Sir *Paul*, will you ſend *Careleſs* into the Hall, if you meet him?

Sir *P. Pl.* I will, I will; I'll go and look for him on purpoſe.

SCENE V.

BRISK *alone.*

So, now they are all gone, and I have an Opportunity to practiſe.—Ah! my dear Lady *Froth!* She's

She's a moſt engaging Creature, if ſhe were not ſo fond of that damned coxcombly Lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him Wit too, to keep in with him.—No Matter, ſhe's a Woman of Parts, and, egad, Parts will carry her. She ſaid, ſhe would follow me into the Gallery.—Now to make my Approaches—Hem, hem! Ah Ma- *(bows)* dam!—Pox on't! why ſhould I diſparage my Parts by thinking what to ſay? none but dull Rogues *think*. Witty Men, like rich Fellows, are always ready for all Expences; while your Blockheads, like poor needy Scoundrels, are forced to examine their Stock, and forecaſt the Charges of the Day. Here ſhe comes:—I'll ſeem not to ſee her, and try to win her with a new airy Invention of my own: hem!

SCENE VII.

[*To him*] *Lady* FROTH.

Briſk *ſings, walking about.*

I'm ſick with Love, ha, ha, ha! *pr'ythee come cure me I'm ſick with*, &c.—O ye Powers! O my Lady *Froth!* my Lady *Froth!* my Lady *Froth!* heigho! break my Heart; Gods, I thank you.

[*Stands muſing, with his Arms acroſs.*

Lady *Froth.* O Heavens, Mr. *Briſk!* What's the Matter?

Briſk. My Lady *Froth!* your Ladyſhip's moſt humble Servant.—The Matter, Madam? Nothing, Madam, nothing at all, egad. I was fallen into the moſt agreeable Amuſement in the whole Province of Contemplation: that's all.—I'll ſeem to conceal my Paſſion, and that will look like Reſpect. [*Aſide.*

Lady *Froth.* Bleſs me, why did you call out upon me ſo loud?

Briſk. O Lord! I, Madam! I beſeech your Ladyſhip—when?

Lady *Froth.* Juſt now as I came in, bleſs me! why, don't you know it?

Briſk. Not I, let me periſh!—But did I? ſtrange! I confeſs, your Ladyſhip was in my Thoughts; and I was in a ſort of Dream, that did in a manner preſent a very pleaſing Object to my Imagination: but—but did I indeed?—To ſee how Love and Murder will out. But did I really name my Lady *Froth?*

Lady *Froth,* Three Times aloud, as I love Letters!—But did you talk of Love? O *Parnaſſus!* who would have thought Mr. *Briſk* could have been in Love, ha, ha, ha! O Heavens! I thought you could have no Miſtreſs but the Nine Muſes.

Briſk. No more I have, egad, for I adore them all in your Ladyſhip—Let me periſh, I don't know whether to be ſplenetic or airy upon't; the Deuce take me if I can tell whether I am glad or ſorry that your Ladyſhip has made the Diſcovery.

Lady *Froth.* O be merry, by all means—Prince *Volſcius* in Love! Ha, ha, ha!

Briſk. O barbarous, to turn me into Ridicule! Yet, ha, ha, ha! The Deuce take me, I can't help laughing myſelf, ha, ha, ha; yet, by Heavens, I have a violent Paſſion for your Ladyſhip, ſeriouſly.

Lady *Froth.* Seriouſly? Ha, ha, ha!

Briſk. Seriouſly, ha, ha, ha! Gad I have, for all I laugh.

Lady *Froth.* Ha, ha, ha! What do you think I laugh at?

Briſk. Me, egad, ha, ha!

Lady *Froth.* No, the Deuce take me if I don't laugh at myſelf; for hang me if I have not a violent Paſſion for Mr. *Briſk,* ha, ha, ha!

Briſk. Seriouſly?

Lady *Froth.* Seriouſly, ha, ha, ha!

Briſk.

Brisk. That's well enough; let me perish, ha, ha, ha! O miraculous! what a happy Diſcovery! Ah my dear charming Lady *Froth!*

Lady *Froth.* Oh my adored Mr. *Brisk!* [*Embrace.*

SCENE VII.

[*To them*] *Lord* FROTH.

Lord *Froth.* The Company are all ready.—How now?

Brisk. Zoons, Madam, there's my Lord. [*Softly to her.*

Lady *Froth.* Take no Notice—but obſerve me—Now caſt off, and meet me at the lower End of the Room, and then join Hands again; I could teach my Lord this Dance purely; but I vow, Mr. *Brisk*, I can't tell how to come ſo near any other Man. O, here's my Lord; now you ſhall ſee me do it with him.

[*They pretend to practiſe Part of a Country Dance.*

Lord *Froth.* [*Aſide.*] Oh, I ſee there's no Harm yet—But I don't like this Familiarity.

Lady *Froth.* Shall you and I do our cloſe Dance, to ſhew Mr. *Briſk?*

Lord *Froth.* No, my Dear, do it with him.

Lady *Froth.* I'll do it with him, my Lord, when you are out of the Way.

Briſk. That's good, egad, that's good.—Deuce take me, I can hardly hold laughing in his Face. [*Aſide.*

Lord *Froth.* Any other Time, my Dear; or we'll dance it below.

Lady *Froth.* With all my Heart.

Briſk. Come, my Lord, I'll wait on you.—My charming, witty Angel! [*To her.*

Lady *Froth.* We ſhall have Whiſpering-time enough, you know, ſince we are Partners.

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

Lady PLYANT *and* CARELESS.

Lady *Plyant.* O Mr. *Careleſs!* Mr. *Careleſs!* I'm ruined, I am undone!

Carel. What's the Matter, Madam?

Lady *Plyant.* O, the unluckeſt Accident! I'm afraid I ſhan't live to tell it you.

Carel. Heaven forbid! what is it?

Lady *Plyant.* I'm in ſuch a Fright; the ſtrangeſt *Quandary* and *Premunire!* I'm all over in an univerſal Agitation, I dare ſwear every *Circumſtance* of me trembles.—O your Letter! your Letter! by an unfortunate Miſtake, I have given Sir *Paul* your Letter inſtead of his own.

Carel. That was unlucky.

Lady *Plyant.* O, yonder he comes, reading of it; for Heavens ſake ſtep, in here, and adviſe me quickly, before he ſees.

SCENE IX.

Sir PAUL, *with a Letter.*

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* O Providence! what a Conſpiracy have I diſcovered! But let me ſee to make an End on't.—*(Reads)* Hum!—"After Supper, in the Ward-"robe by the Gallery. If Sir *Paul* ſhould ſurprize us, "I have a Commiſſion from him to treat with you "about the very Matter of Fact."—Matter of Fact! Very pretty; it ſeems then I am conducing to my own Cuckoldom: why this is the very traiterous Poſition of taking up Arms by my Authority, againſt my Perſon! Well, let me ſee—"Till then, I languiſh in Ex-"pectation of my adored Charmer. Dying *Ned Careleſs.*" Gads-bud! would that were Matter of Fact too? Die and be damned, for a *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Iſcariot* both. O Friendſhip! what art thou but a Name? Henceforward let no Man make a Friend, that would not

not be a Cuckold: for whomſoever he receives into his Boſom, will find the Way to his Bed, and there return his Careſſes with Intereſt to his Wife. Have I for this been pinioned Night after Night for three Years paſt? have I been ſwathed in Blankets, till I have been even deprived of Motion? have I approached the Marriage Bed with Reverence as to a ſacred Shrine, and denied myſelf the Enjoyment of lawful domeſtic Pleaſures to preſerve its Purity? and muſt I now find it polluted by foreign Iniquity? O, my Lady *Plyant*, you were chaſte as Ice; but you are melted now, and falſe as Water.—But Providence has been conſtant to me, in diſcovering this Conſpiracy! ſtill I am beholden to Providence; if it were not for Providence, ſure, poor Sir *Paul*, thy Heart would break!

SCENE X.

[*To him*] *Lady* PLYANT.

Lady *Plyant*. So Sir, I ſee you have read the Letter.—Well now, Sir *Paul*, what do you think of your Friend *Careleſs*? Has he been treacherous? or did you give his Inſolence a Licence to make a Trial of your Wife's ſuſpected Virtue? Do you ſee here? [*Snatches the Letter, as in Anger.*] Look, read it! Gad's my Life! if I thought it were ſo, I would this Moment renounce all Communication with you. Ungrateful Monſter! He? Is it ſo? Ay, I ſee it, a Plot upon my Honour; your guilty Cheeks confeſs it. Oh, where ſhall wronged Virtue fly for Reparation! I'll be divorced this Inſtant.

Sir. *Pl. Plyant*. Gads-bud, what ſhall I ſay? This is the ſtrangeſt Surprize! Why I don't know any thing at all, nor I don't know whether there be any thing at all in the World, or no.

Lady *Plyant*. I thought I ſhould try you, falſe Man! I that never diſſembled in my Life: yet, to make Trial of you, pretended to like that Monſter of Iniquity, *Careleſs*; and found out that Contrivance to let you

you ſee this Letter; which now I find was of your own inditing—I do, Heathen, I do: ſee my Face no more; I'll be divorced preſently.

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* O ſtrange! what will become of me?—I'm ſo amazed, and ſo overjoyed, ſo afraid, and ſo ſorry.—But did you give me this Letter on Purpoſe, hey? Did you?

Lady *Plyant.* Did I? Do you doubt me, *Turk, Saracen?* I have a Couſin that's a Proctor in the Commons, I'll go to him inſtantly.

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* Hold, ſtay, I beſeech your Ladyſhip—I'm ſo overjoyed, ſtay, I'll confeſs all.

Lady *Plyant.* What will you confeſs, *Jew?*

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* Why now, as I hope to be ſaved, I had no Hand in this Letter—Nay hear me, I beſeech your Ladyſhip. The Devil take me now, if he did not go beyond my Commiſſion!—If I deſired him to do any more than ſpeak a good Word only juſt for me; gads-bud, only for poor Sir *Paul*—I'm an *Anabaptiſt*, or a *Jew*, or what you pleaſe to call me.

Lady *Plyant.* Why, is not here Matter of Fact?

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* Ay, but, by your own Virtue and Continency, that Matter of Fact is all his own doing—I confeſs I had a great Deſire to have ſome Honours conferred upon me, which lye all in your Ladyſhip's Breaſt; and, he being a well-ſpoken Man, I deſired him to intercede for me.

Lady *Plyant.* Did you ſo, Preſumption! Oh! he comes, the *Tarquin* comes; I cannot bear his Sight.

SCENE XI.

CARELESS, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT.

Careleſs. Sir *Paul*, I'm glad I've met with you; egad I have ſaid all I could, but cannot prevail—Then my Friendſhip to you has carried me a little farther in this Matter—

Sir

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* Indeed! Well, Sir.—I'll diſſemble with him a little. [*Aſide.*

Carel. Why, faith, I have in my Time known honeſt Gentlemen abuſed by a pretended Coyneſs in their Wives; and I had a Mind to try my Lady's Virtue—and when I could not prevail for you, egad, I pretended to be in Love myſelf—but all in vain, ſhe would not hear a Word upon that Subject. Then I wrote a Letter to her; I don't know what Effects that will have, but I'll be ſure to tell you when I do, though, by this Light, I believe her Virtue is impregnable.

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* O Providence! Providence! What Diſcoveries are here made? Why, this is better and more miraculous than the reſt.

Carel. What do you mean?

Sir *Pl. Plyant.* I can't tell you, I'm ſo overjoyed; come along with me to my Lady, I cannot contain myſelf; come, my dear Friend.

Carel. So, ſo, ſo, this Difficulty's over. [*Aſide.*

SCENE XII.

MELLEFONT, MASKWELL, *from different Doors.*

Mell. Maſkwell! I have been looking for you—it is within a Quarter of Eight.

Maſkw. My Lady is juſt gone into my Lord's Cloſet! you had beſt ſteal into her Chamber before ſhe comes, and lye concealed there; otherwiſe ſhe may lock the Door when we are together, and you not eaſily get in, to ſurprize us.

Mell. He? You ſay true.

Maſkw. You had beſt make haſte; for, after ſhe has made ſome Apology to the Company for her own and my Lord's Abſence all this while, ſhe'll retire to her Chamber inſtantly.

Mell. I go, this Moment. Now, Fortune, I defy thee.

SCENE

SCENE XIII.

MASKWELL, *alone.*

I confeſs you may be allowed to be ſecure in your own Opinion; the Appearance is very fair, but I have an After-game to play, that ſhall turn the Tables; and here comes the Man that I muſt manage.

SCENE XIV.

[*To him*] *Lord* TOUCHWOOD.

Lord *Touchw.* *Maſkwell*, you are the Man I wiſhed to meet.

Maſkw. I am happy to be in the Way of your Lordſhip's Commands.

Lord *Touchw.* I have always found you prudent and careful in any thing that has concerned me or my Family.

Maſkw. I were a Villain elſe—I am bound, by Duty and Gratitude, and my own Inclination, to be ever your Lordſhip's Servant.

Lord *Touchw.* Enough—You are my Friend; I know it: Yet there has been a Thing in your Knowledge, which has concerned me nearly, that you have concealed from me.

Maſkw. My Lord!

Lord *Touchw.* Nay, I excuſe your Friendſhip to my unnatural Nephew thus far—But I know you have been privy to his impious Deſigns upon my Wife. This Evening ſhe has told me all: her Good-nature concealed it as long as was poſſible; but he perſeveres ſo in Villainy, that ſhe has told me even you were weary of diſſuading him, though you have once actually hindered him from forcing her.

Maſkw. I am ſorry, my Lord, I cannot make you an Anſwer; this is an Occaſion in which I would not willingly be ſilent.

Lord

Lord *Touchw.* I know you would excuſe him—and, I know as well that you cannot.

Maſkw. Indeed I was in Hopes it had been a youthful Heat, that might have ſoon boiled over; but—

Lord *Touchw.* Say on.

Maſkw. I have nothing more to ſay, my Lord—but to expreſs my Concern; for I think his Frenzy increaſes daily.

Lord *Touchw.* How! Give me but Proof of it, ocular Proof, that I may juſtify my Dealing with him to the World; and ſhare my Fortunes.

Maſkw. O my Lord! conſider that is hard: beſides, Time may work upon him. Then, for me to do it! I have profeſſed an everlaſting Friendſhip to him.

Lord *Touchw.* He is your Friend; and what am I?

Maſkw. I am anſwered.

Lord *Touchw.* Fear not his Diſpleaſure; I will put you out of his and Fortune's Power; and, for that thou art ſcrupulouſly honeſt, I will ſecure thy Fidelity to him, and give my Honour never to own any Diſcovery that you ſhall make me. Can you give me a demonſtrative Proof? Speak.

Maſkw. I wiſh I could not!—To be plain, my Lord, I intended this Evening to have tried all Arguments to diſſuade him from a Deſign which I ſuſpect; and if I had not ſucceeded, to have informed your Lordſhip of what I knew.

Lord *Touchw.* I thank you. What is the Villain's Purpoſe?

Maſkw. He has owned nothing to me of late; and what I mean now, is only a bare Suſpicion of my own. If your Lordſhip will meet me a Quarter of an Hour hence there, in that Lobby by my Lady's Bed-chamber, I ſhall be able to tell you more.

Lord *Touchw.* I will.

Maſkw. My Duty to your Lordſhip makes me do a ſevere Piece of Juſtice.

Lord

Lord *Touchw.* I will be ſecret, and reward your Honeſty beyond your Hopes.

SCENE XV.

SCENE *opening from* Lady TOUCHWOOD's *Cloſet.*

Miſſ. ſola. Pray Heaven my Aunt keep Touch with her Aſſignation—Oh, that her Lord were but ſweating behind this Hanging, with the Expectation of what I ſhall ſee!—Hark, ſhe comes—Little does ſhe think what a Mine is juſt ready to ſpring under her Feet! But to my Poſt.

[*Goes behind the Hanging.*

SCENE XVI.

Lady *Touchw.* It is Eight a Clock: methinks I ſhould have found him here. Who does not prevent the Hour of Love, outſtays the Time; for to be dully punctual, is too ſlow.—I was accuſing you of Neglect.

SCENE XVII.

Lady TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

MELLEFONT *aſcending.*

Maſkw. I confeſs, you do reproach me when I ſee you here before me; but it is fit I ſhould be ſtill behind-hand, ſtill to be more and more indebted to your Goodneſs.

Lady *Touchw.* You can excuſe a Fault too well, not to have been to blame.—A ready Anſwer ſhews you were prepared.

Maſkw. Guilt is ever at a Loſs, and Confuſion waits upon it; when Innocence and bold Truth are always ready for Expreſſion—

Lady *Touchw.* Not in Love. Words are the weak Support of cold Indifference; Love has no Language to be heard.

Maſkw.

Maſkw. Exceſs of Joy has made me ſtupid! Thus may my Lips be ever cloſed. *(Kiſſes her.)* And thus—Oh, who would not loſe his Speech, upon Condition to have Joys above it?

Lady *Touchw.* Hold, let me lock the Door firſt. [*Goes to the Door.*

Maſkw. [*Aſide.*] That I believed; it was well I left the private Paſſage open.

Lady *Touchw.* So, that is ſafe.

Maſkw. And ſo may all your Pleaſures be, and ſecret as this Kiſs!

Melleſ. And may all Treachery be thus diſcovered! [*Leaps out.*

Lady *Touchw.* Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Melleſ. Villain! [*Offers to draw.*

Maſk. Nay then, there is but one Way. [*Runs out.*

SCENE XVIII.

Lady TOUCHWOOD, MELLEFONT.

Melleſ. Say you ſo, were you provided for an Eſcape? Hold, Madam; you have no more Holes to your Burrow, I'll ſtand between you and this Sally-port.

Lady *Touchw.* Thunder ſtrike thee dead, for this Deceit! Immediate Lightning blaſt thee, me, and the whole World!—Oh! I could rack myſelf, play the Vulture to my own Heart, and gnaw it piece-meal, for not boding to me this Misfortune.

Melleſ. Be patient!

Lady *Touchw.* Be damned.

Melleſ. Conſider, I have you on the Hook; you will but flounder yourſelf a-weary, and be nevertheleſs my Priſoner.

Lady *Touchw.* I'll hold my Breath, and die, but I'll be free.

Melleſ. O Madam, have a Care of dying unprepared; I doubt you have ſome unrepented Sins, that may hang heavy, and retard your Flight.

Lady

Lady *Touchw.* O! what ſhall I do? ſay, whither ſhall I turn? has Hell no Remedy?

Melleſ. None. Hell has ſerved you even as Heaven has done, left you to yourſelf.—You are in a kind of *Eraſmus's* Paradiſe; yet, if you pleaſe, you may make it a Purgatory; and, with a little Penance and my Abſolution, all this may turn to good Account.

Lady *Touchw.* [*Aſide.*] Hold in, my Paſſion; and fall, fall a little, thou ſwelling Heart! Let me have ſome Intermiſſion of this Rage, and one Minute's Coolneſs to diſſemble. [*She weeps.*

Melleſ. You have been to blame.—I like thoſe Tears, and hope they are of the pureſt Kind—penitential Tears.

Lady *Touchw.* O, the Scene was ſhifted quick before me—I had not Time to think.—I was ſurprized to ſee a Monſter in the Glaſs, and now I find 'tis myſelf. Can you have Mercy, to forgive the Faults I have imagined, but never put in Practice?—O conſider, conſider how fatal you have been to me; you have already killed the Quiet of this Life. The Love of you was the firſt wandering Fire that e'er miſled my Steps; and, while I had only that in View, I was betrayed into unthought-of Ways of Ruin.

Melleſ. May I believe this true?

Lady *Touchw.* O, be not cruelly incredulous!—How can you doubt theſe ſtreaming Eyes? Keep the ſevereſt Eye o'er all my future Conduct; and, if I once relapſe, let me not hope Forgiveneſs; 'twill ever be in your Power to ruin me.—My Lord ſhall ſign to your Deſires; I will myſelf create your Happineſs, and *Cynthia* ſhall be this Night your Bride.—Do but conceal my Failings, and forgive.

Melleſ. Upon ſuch Terms, I will be ever yours, in every honeſt Way.

SCENE

SCENE XIX.

MASKWELL *ſoftly introduces Lord* TOUCHWOOD, *and retires.*

Maſkw. I have kept my Word: he's here; but I muſt not be ſeen.

SCENE XX.

Lady TOUCHWOOD, *Lord* TOUCHWOOD, MELLEFONT.

Lord *Touchw.* Hell and Amazement! ſhe's in Tears.

Lady *Touchw.* [*Kneeling.*] Eternal Bleſſings thank you!—Ha! my Lord liſtening! O! Fortune has o'erpaid me all! All, all's my own! [*Aſide.*

Melleſ. Nay, I beſeech you, riſe.

Lady *Touchw.* [*Aloud.*] Never, never! I'll grow to the Ground, be buried quick beneath it, ere I'll be conſenting to ſo damned a Sin as Inceſt! unnatural Inceſt!

Melleſ. Ha!

Lady *Touchw.* O cruel Man! will you not let me go?—I'll forgive all that's paſt—O Heaven! you will not raviſh me?

Melleſ. Damnation!

Lord *Touchw.* Monſter! Dog! Your Life ſhall anſwer this——[*Draws, and rushes at* Mellefont, *is held by Lady* Touchwood.

Lady *Touchw.* O, Heavens, my Lord! Hold, hold, for Heaven's ſake.

Melleſ. Confuſion! my Uncle! O the damned Sorcereſs!

Lady *Touchw.* Moderate your Rage, good my Lord! He's mad, alas he's mad—indeed he is, my Lord, and knows not what he does—ſee how wild he looks!

Melleſ.

Mellef. By Heaven, 'twere ſcandalous not to be mad, and ſee ſuch Wickedneſs.

Lady *Touchw.* My Lord, you hear him; he talks idly.

Lord *Touchw.* Hence from my Sight, thou Eving Infamy to my Name; when next I ſee that Face, I'll write Villain in't with my Sword's Point.

Mellef. Now, by my Soul, I will not go till I have made known my Wrongs.—Nay, till I have made known yours, which (if poſſible) are greater—though ſhe has all the Hoſt of Hell her Servants.

Lady *Touchw.* Alas, he raves! talks very Poetry! For Heaven's Sake away, my Lord; he'll either tempt you to Extravagance, or commit ſome himſelf.

Mellef. Death and Furies! will you not hear me!—Why, by Heaven, ſhe laughs, grins, points to your Back; ſhe forks out Cuckoldom with her Fingers, and you're running Horn-mad after your Fortune.

[*As ſhe is going, ſhe turns back and ſmiles at him.*

Lord *Touchw.* I fear he's mad indeed.—Let's ſend *Maſkwell* to him.

Mellef. Send him to her.

Lady *Touchw.* Come, come, good my Lord; my Heart akes ſo, I ſhall faint if I ſtay.

SCENE XXI.

MELLEFONT *alone.*

O, I could curſe my Stars, Fate, and Chance; all Cauſes and Accidents of Fortune in this Life! But to what Purpoſe? Yet, 'ſdeath, for a Man to have the Fruit of all his Induſtry grow full and ripe, ready to drop into his Mouth; and juſt when he holds out his Hand to gather it, to have a ſudden Whirlwind come, tear up Tree and all, and bear away the very Root and Foundation of his Hopes! What Temper can contain? They talk of ſending *Maſkwell* to me; I never had more Need of him—But what can he do? Imagination cannot

cannot form a fairer and more plauſible Deſign, than this of his, which has miſcarried.—O my precious Aunt! I ſhall never thrive, without I deal with the Devil, or another Woman.

Women, like Fluxes, have a deſtroying Power,
Ne'er to be ſtanch'd, till they themſelves devour.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

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ACT V. SCENE I.

Lady TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

LADY *Touchw.* Was it not lucky?

Maſkw. Lucky! Fortune is your own, and 'tis her Intereſt ſo to be; by Heaven, I believe you can controul her Power, and ſhe fears it. Though Chance brought my Lord, 'twas your own Art that turned it to Advantage.

Lady *Touchw.* 'Tis true, it might have been my Ruin.—But yonder's my Lord, I believe he's coming to find you; I'll not be ſeen.

SCENE II.

MASKWELL, *alone.*

So; I durſt not own my introducing my Lord, though it ſucceeded well for her; for ſhe would have ſuſpected a Deſign, which I ſhould have been puzzled to excuſe. My Lord is thoughtful—I'll be ſo too; yet he ſhall know my Thoughts; or think he does.

SCENE III.

[*To him.*] *Lord* TOUCHWOOD.

Maſkw. What have I done?

Lord *Touchw.* Talking to himſelf!

Maſkw. 'Twas honeſt—and ſhall I be rewarded for it? No, 'twas honeſt, therefore I ſhan't—nay, rather therefore I ought not; for it rewards itſelf.

Lord *Touchw.* Unequaled Virtue! [*Aſide.*

Maſkw. But ſhould it be known! Then I have loſt a Friend!—He was an ill Man, and I have gained; for half myſelf I lent him, and that I have recalled; ſo I have ſerved myſelf; and, what is yet better, I have ſerved a worthy Lord, to whom I owe myſelf.

Lord *Touchw.* Excellent Man! [*Aſide.*

Maſk. Yet I am wretched. O, there is a Secret burns within this Breaſt, which, ſhould it once blaze forth, would ruin all, conſume my honeſt Character, and brand me with the Name of Villain.

Lord *Touchw.* Ha!

Maſkw. Why do I love? Yet, Heaven and my waking Conſcience are my Witneſſes, I never gave one working Thought a Vent, which might diſcover that I loved; nor ever muſt. No, let it prey upon my Heart; for I would rather die, than ſeem once, barely ſeem, diſhoneſt. O, ſhould it once be known I love fair *Cynthia*, all this that I have done would look like Rival's Malice, falſe Friendſhip to my Lord, and baſe Self-intereſt. Let me periſh firſt, and from this Hour avoid all Sight and Speech, and, if I can, all Thought of that pernicious Beauty. Ha! But what is my Diſtraction doing? I am wildly talking to myſelf, and ſome ill Chance might have directed malicious Ears this Way. [*Seems to ſtart, ſeeing my Lord.*

Lord *Touchw.* Start not—let guilty and diſhoneſt Souls ſtart at the Revelation of their Thoughts; but be thou fixed, as is thy Virtue.

Maſkw.

Maſkw. I am confounded, and beg your Lordſhip's Pardon for thoſe free Diſcourſes which I have had with myſelf.

Lord *Touchw.* Come, I beg your Pardon that I over-heard you, and yet it ſhall not need—Honeſt *Maſkwell!* thy and my good Genius led me hither—Mine, in that I have diſcovered ſo much manly Virtue; thine, in that thou ſhalt have due Reward of all thy Worth. Give me thy Hand—my Nephew is the alone remaining Branch of all our ancient Family; him I thus blow away, and conſtitute thee in his room to be my Heir.

Maſkw. Now Heaven forbid!

Lord *Touchw.* No more—I have reſolved.—The Writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be ſigned, and have his Name inſerted—yours will fill the Blank as well—I will have no Reply—let me command this Time; for 'tis the laſt, in which I will aſſume Authority—hereafter, you ſhall rule where I have Power.

Maſkw. I humbly would petition—

Lord *Touchw.* Is't for yourſelf?—[Maſk. *pauſes.*] I'll hear of nought for any body elſe.

Maſkw. Then witneſs Heaven for me, this Wealth and Honour was not of my ſeeking, nor would I build my Fortune on another's Ruin: I had but one Deſire—

Lord *Touchw.* Thou ſhalt enjoy it—If all I'm worth in Wealth or Intereſt can purchaſe *Cynthia*, ſhe is thine.—I'm ſure Sir *Paul's* Conſent will follow Fortune; I'll quickly ſhew him which Way that is going.

Maſkw. You oppreſs me with Bounty; my Gratitude is weak, and ſhrinks beneath the Weight, and cannot riſe to thank you.—What, enjoy my Love! Forgive the Tranſports of a Bleſſing ſo unexpected, ſo unhoped for, ſo unthought of!

Lord *Touchw.* I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee.

SCENE IV.

MASKWELL *alone.*

This is proſperous indeed!—Why let him find me out a Villain, ſettled in Poſſeſſion of a fair Eſtate, and full Fruition of my Love, I'll bear the Railings of a loſing Gameſter.—But ſhould he find me out before! 'tis dangerous to delay.—Let me think—ſhould my Lord proceed to treat openly of my Marriage with *Cynthia*, all muſt be diſcovered, and *Melleſont* can be no longer blinded.—It muſt not be; nay, ſhould my Lady know it—ay, then were fine Work indeed! Her Fury would ſpare nothing, though ſhe involved herſelf in Ruin. No, it muſt be by Stratagem—I muſt deceive *Melleſont* once more, and get my Lord to conſent to my private Management. He comes opportunely. Now will I, in my old Way, diſcover the whole and real Truth of the Matter to him, that he may not ſuſpect one Word on't.

No Maſk like open Truth, to cover Lies;
As to go naked is the beſt Diſguiſe.

SCENE V.

[*To him*] MELLEFONT.

Melleſ. O *Maſkwell*, what Hope? I am confounded in a Maze of Thoughts, each leading into one another, and all ending in Perplexity. My Uncle will not ſee nor hear me.

Maſkw. No Matter, Sir; don't trouble your Head: all's in my Power.

Melleſ. How? for Heaven's Sake!

Maſkw. Little do you think that your Aunt has kept her Word.—How the Devil ſhe wrought my Lord into this Dotage, I know not; but he's gone to Sir *Paul* about my Marriage with *Cynthia*, and has appointed me his Heir.

Melleſ. The Devil he has! What's to be done?

Maſkw.

Maſkw. I have it, it muſt be by Stratagem; for it's in vain to make Application to him; I think I have that in my Head that cannot fail. Where's *Cynthia?*

Melleſ. In the Garden.

Maſkw. Let us go and conſult her; my Life for yours, I cheat my Lord.

SCENE VI.

Lord TOUCHWOOD, *Lady* TOUCHWOOD.

Lady *Touchw. Maſkwell* your Heir, and marry *Cynthia!*

Lord *Touchw.* I cannot do too much, for ſo much Merit.

Lady *Touchw.* But this is a Thing of too great Moment to be ſo ſuddenly reſolved. Why *Cynthia?* why muſt he be married? is there not Reward enough in raiſing his low Fortune, but he muſt mix his Blood with mine, and wed my Niece? How know you that my Brother will conſent, or ſhe? Nay, he himſelf perhaps may have Affections otherwhere.

Lord *Touchw.* No, I am convinced he loves her.

Lady *Touchw. Maſkwell* love *Cynthia?* impoſſible!

Lord *Touchw.* I tell you, he confeſſed it to me.

Lady *Touchw.* Confuſion! How's this? [*Aſide.*

Lord *Touchw.* His Humility long ſtifled his Paſſion; and his Love of *Melleſont* would have made him ſtill conceal it.—But, by Encouragement, I wrung the Secret from him; and know he's no Way to be rewarded but in her. I'll defer my farther Proceedings in it till you have conſidered it; but remember how we are both indebted to him.

SCENE VII.

Lady TOUCHWOOD *alone.*

Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all! Villain! Oh, I am wild

with this Surprize of Treachery, It is impoſſible; it cannot be—He love *Cynthia!* What! have I been Bawd to his Deſigns, his Property only, a Baiting-place! Now I ſee what made him falſe to *Melleſont.* —Shame and Diſtraction! I cannot bear it. Oh! what Woman can bear to be a Property? To be kindled to a Flame, only to light him to another's Arms? Oh! that I were Fire indeed, that I might burn the vile Traitor! What ſhall I do? How ſhall I think? I cannot think.—All my Deſigns are loſt, my Love unfated, my Revenge unfiniſhed, and freſh Cauſe of Fury from unthought-of Plagues.

SCENE VIII.

[*To her*] *Sir* PAUL PLYANT.

Sir *P. Plyant.* Madam, Siſter, my Lady Siſter, did you ſee my Lady my Wife?

Lady *Touchw.* Oh! Torture!

Sir *P. Plyant.* Gads-bud, I can't find her high nor low; where can ſhe be, think you?

Lady *Touchw.* Where ſhe's ſerving you, as all your Sex ought to be ſerved; making you a Beaſt. Don't you know that you're a Fool, Brother?

Sir *P. Plyant.* A Fool? he, he, he! you're merry —No, no, not I, I know no ſuch Matter.

Lady *Touchw.* Why then you don't know half your Happineſs.

Sir *P. Plyant.* That's a Jeſt with all my Heart, faith and troth.—But harkye, my Lord told me ſomething of a Revolution of Things; I don't know what to make on't.—Gads-bud, I muſt conſult my Wife—he talks of diſinheriting his Nephew: and I don't know what.—Look you, Siſter, I muſt know what my Girl has to truſt to: or not a Syllable of a Wedding, Gads-bud!—to ſhew you that I am not a Fool.

Lady *Touchw.* Hear me; conſent to the breaking off this Marriage, and the promoting any other, without conſulting

conſulting me, and I'll renounce all Blood, all Relation and Concern, with you for ever—nay, I'll be your Enemy, and purſue you to Deſtruction; I'll tear your Eyes out, and tread you under my Feet.

Sir *P. Plyant.* Why, what's the Matter now? Good Lord! what's all this for? Pooh, here's a Joke indeed! —Why, where's my Wife?

Lady *Touchw.* With *Careleſs*, in the cloſe Arbour; he may want you by this Time, as much as you want her.

Sir *P. Plyant.* O, if ſhe be with Mr. *Careleſs*, 'tis well enough.

Lady *Touchw.* Fool, Sot, inſenſible Ox!—But remember what I ſaid to you, or you had better eat your own Horns, by this Light you had.

Sir *P. Plyant.* You're a paſſionate Woman, Gadsbud!—But, to ſay Truth, all our Family are choleric; I am the only peaceable Perſon amongſt them.

SCENE IX.

MELLEFONT, MASKWELL, *and* CYNTHIA.

Melleſ. I know no other Way but this he has propoſed; if you have Love enough to run the Venture.

Cynthia. I don't know whether I have Love enough —but I find I have Obſtinacy enough to purſue whatever I have once reſolved; and a true Female Courage to oppoſe any Thing that reſiſts my Will, though 'twere Reaſon itſelf.

Maſkw. That's right.—Well, I'll ſecure the Writings, and run the Hazard along with you.

Cynthia. But how can the Coach and Six Horſes be got ready without Suſpicion?

Maſkw. Leave it to my Care; that ſhall be ſo far from being ſuſpected, that it ſhall be got ready by my Lord's own Order.

Melleſ. How?

Maskw. Why, I intend to tell my Lord the whole Matter of our Contrivance: that's my Way.

Melleſ. I don't underſtand you.

Maskw. Why, I'll tell my Lord, I laid this Plot with you, on purpoſe to betray you; and that which put me upon it was, the finding it impoſſible to gain the Lady any other Way, but in Hopes of her marrying you.

Melleſ. So—

Maskw. So? why ſo, while you're buſied in making yourſelf ready, I'll wheedle her into the Coach; and, inſtead of you, borrow my Lord's Chaplain, and ſo run away with her myſelf.

Melleſ. O, I conceive you: you'll tell him ſo?

Maskw. Tell him ſo? ay; why you don't think I mean to do ſo?

Melleſ. No, no; ha, ha! I dare ſwear thou wilt not.

Maskw. Therefore, for our farther Security, I would have you diſguiſed like a Parſon, that, if my Lord ſhould have Curioſity to peep, he may not diſcover you in the Coach, but think the Cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Melleſ. Excellent *Maskwell!* thou wert certainly meant for a Stateſman or a Jeſuit—but thou art too honeſt for one, and too pious for the other.

Maskw. Well, get yourſelves ready, and meet me in half an Hour, yonder, in my Lady's Dreſſing-room; go by the Back Stairs, and ſo we may ſlip down without being obſerved; I'll ſend the Chaplain to you with his Robes. I have made him my own—and ordered him to meet us To-morrow Morning at *St. Albans*; there we will ſum up this Account to all our Satisfactions.

Melleſ. Should I begin to thank or praiſe thee, I ſhould waſte the little Time we have.

SCENE

SCENE X.

CYNTHIA, MASKWELL.

Maſkw. Madam, you will be ready?

Cynth. I will be punctual to the Minute. [*Going.*

Maſkw. Stay, I have a Doubt.—Upon ſecond Thoughts, we had better meet in the Chaplain's Chamber, here, the corner Chamber at this End of the Gallery; there is a Back Way into it, ſo that you need not come through this Door—and a Pair of private Stairs leading down to the Stables.—It will be more convenient.

Cynth. I am guided by you—but *Melleſont* will miſtake.

Maſk. No, no, I'll after him immediately, and tell him.

Cynth. I will not fail.

SCENE XI.

MASKWELL, *alone.*

Why, *qui vult decipi, decipiatur.*—'Tis no Fault of mine. I have told them in plain Terms, how eaſy it is for me to cheat them; and if they will not hear the Serpent's Hiſs, they muſt be ſtung into Experience and future Caution.—Now to prepare my Lord to conſent to this.—But firſt I muſt inſtruct my little *Levite*; there is no Plot, public or private, that can expect to proſper without one of them has a Finger in it. He promiſed to be within at this Hour.—Mr. *Saygrace*, Mr. *Saygrace.*

[*Goes to the Chamber Door, and knocks.*

SCENE XII.

MASKWELL, SAYGRACE.

Mr. Saygrace [*looking out.*] Sweet Sir, I will but pen the laſt Line of an Acroſtic, and be with you in the Twinkling of an Ejaculation, in the pronouncing of an *Amen*, or before you can—

Maſkw. Nay, good Mr. *Saygrace*, do not prolong the Time, by deſcribing to me the Shortneſs of your Stay; rather, if you pleaſe, defer the finiſhing of your Wit, and let us talk about our Buſineſs; it ſhall be Tithes in your Way.

Sayg. [*Enters*] You ſhall prevail. I would break off in the Middle of a Sermon, to do you a Pleaſure.

Maſkw. You could not do me a greater—except the Buſineſs in Hand.—Have you provided a Habit for *Melleſont*?

Sayg. I have; they are ready in my Chamber, together with a clean ſtarched Band and Cuffs.

Maſk. Good, let them be carried to him.—Have you ſticked the Gown Sleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waſte Time in putting it on?

Sayg. I have; the Gown will not be indued without Perplexity.

Maſkw. Meet me in half an Hour, here in your own Chamber. When *Cynthia* comes, let there be no Light; and do not ſpeak, that ſhe may not diſtinguiſh you from *Melleſont*. I'll urge Haſte, to excuſe your Silence.

Sayg. You have no more Commands?

Maſkw. None, your Text is ſhort.

Sayg. But pithy, and I will handle it with Diſcretion.

Maſk. It will be the firſt you have ſo ſerved.

SCENE

SCENE XIII.

Lord TOUCHWOOD, MASKWELL.

Lord *Touchw.* Sure I was born to be controlled by thoſe I ſhould command. My very Slaves will ſhortly give me Rules how I ſhall govern them.

Maſkw. I am concerned, to ſee your Lordſhip diſcompoſed.

Lord *Touchw.* Have you ſeen my Wife lately, or diſobliged her?

Maſkw. No, my Lord.—What can this mean! [*Aſide.*

Lord *Touchw.* Then *Melleſont* has urged ſomebody to incenſe her.—Something ſhe has heard of you, which carries her beyond the Bounds of Patience.

Maſkw. This I feared! (*Aſide.*)—Did not your Lordſhip tell her of the Honours you deſigned me?

Lord *Touchw.* Yes.

Maſkw. 'Tis that; you know my Lady has a high Spirit; ſhe thinks I am unworthy.

Lord *Touchw.* Unworthy! 'Tis an ignorant Pride in her to think ſo—Honeſty to me is true Nobility. However, it is my Will it ſhall be ſo; and that ſhould be convincing to her as much as Reaſon.—By Heaven, I'll not be Wife ridden; were it poſſible, it ſhould be done this Night.

Maſkw. By Heaven, he meets my Wiſhes! (*Aſide.*)—Few Things are impoſſible to willing Minds.

Lord *Touchw.* Inſtruct me how this may be done, you ſhall ſee I want no Inclination.

Maſkw. I had laid a ſmall Deſign for To-morrow (as Love will be inventing), which I thought to communicate to your Lordſhip—but it may be as well done To-night.

Lord *Touchw.* Here's Company.—Come this Way, and tell me.

SCENE XIV.

CARELESS *and* CYNTHIA.

Carel. Is not that he, now gone out with my Lord?

Cynth. Yes

Carel. By Heaven, there's Treachery.—The Confusion that I saw your Father in, my Lady *Touchwood's* Passion, with what imperfectly I overheard between my Lord and her, confirm me in my Fears.—Where's *Mellefont?*

Cynth. Here he comes.

SCENE XV.

[*To them*] MELLEFONT.

Cynth. Did *Maskwell* tell you any thing of the Chaplain's Chamber?

Melle. No, my Dear; will you get ready?—The Things are all in my Chamber; I want nothing but the Habit.

Carel. You are betrayed, and *Maskwell* is the Villain I always thought him.

Cynth. When you were gone, he said his Mind was changed, and bid me meet him in the Chaplain's Room, pretending immediately to follow you, and give you Notice.

Melle. How!

Carel. There's *Saygrace* tripping by with a Bundle under his Arm.—He cannot be ignorant that *Maskwell* means to use his Chamber; let's follow and examine him.

Melle. 'Tis Loss of Time—I cannot think him false.

SCENE XVI.

CYNTHIA, *and Lord* TOUCHWOOD.

Cynth. My Lord musing! [*Aside.*

Lord

Lord *Touchw.* He has a quick Invention, if this were ſuddenly deſigned!—Yet he ſays he had prepared my Chaplain already.

Cynth. How's this? Now I fear indeed.

Lord *Touchw.* *Cynthia* here!—Alone, fair Couſin, and melancholy?

Cynth. Your Lordſhip was thoughtful.

Lord *Touchw.* My Thoughts were on ſerious Buſineſs, not worth your hearing.

Cynth. Mine were on Treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Lord *Touchw.* Treachery concernin gme! Pray be plain—Hark! What Noiſe!

Maſkw. *(within)* Will you not hear me?

Lady *Touchw.* *(within)* No, Monſter! Traitor! No.

Cynth. My Lady and *Maſkwell!* this may be lucky.—My Lord, let me intreat you to ſtand behind this Skreen, and liſten; perhaps this Chance may give you Proof of what you never could have believed from my Suſpicions.

SCENE XVII.

Lady TOUCHWOOD *with a Dagger, and* MASKWELL. CYNTHIA *and Lord* TOUCHWOOD *abſcond, liſtening.*

Lady *Touchw.* You want but Leiſure to invent freſh Falſehood, and ſooth me to a fond Belief of all your Fictions; but I will ſtab the Lie that's forming in your Heart, and ſave a Sin, in Pity to your Soul.

Maſkw. Strike then—ſince you will have it ſo.

Lady *Touchw.* Ha! A ſteady Villain to the laſt!

Maſk. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

Lady *Touchw.* Thy ſtubborn Temper ſhocks me, and you knew it would—this is Cunning all, and not Courage; no, I know thee well: but thou ſhalt miſs thy Aim.

Maſk. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady

Lady *Touchw.* Ha! Do you mock my Rage? Then this ſhall puniſh your fond, raſh Contempt! Again ſmile? *(Goes to ſtrike.)*—And ſuch a Smile as ſpeaks in Ambiguity! Ten thouſand Meanings lurk in each Corner of that various Face. O! that they were written in thy Heart, that I, with this, might lay thee open to my Sight! But then it will be too late to know—Thou haſt, thou haſt found the only Way to turn my Rage. Too well thou know'ſt my jealous Soul could never bear Uncertainty. Speak then, and tell me—Yet are you ſilent? Oh. I am wildered in all Paſſions! But thus my Anger melts. *(Weeps.)*—Here, take this Poignard; for my very Spirits faint, and I want Strength to hold it; thou haſt diſarmed my Soul.

[*Gives the Dagger.*

Lord *Touchw.* Amazement ſhakes me!—where will this end?

Maſkw. So, it is well—let your wild Fury have a Vent; and when you have Temper, tell me.

Lady *Touchw.* Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Maſkw. *(Aſide.)* Thanks, my Invention! and now I have it for you—Firſt, tell me what urged you to this Violence? For your Paſſion broke in ſuch imperfect Terms, that yet I am to learn the Cauſe.

Lady *Touchw.* My Lord himſelf ſurprized me with the News, you were to marry *Cynthia*—that you had owned your Love to him, and his Indulgence would aſſiſt you to attain your Ends.

Cynth. How, my Lord?

Lord *Touchw.* Pray forbear all Reſentments for a while, and let us hear the reſt.

Maſkw. I grant you, in Appearance, all is true; I ſeemed conſenting to my Lord; nay, tranſported with the Bleſſing.—But could you think that I, who had been happy in your loved Embraces, could ever be fond of an inferior Slavery?

Lord *Touchw.* Ha! O Poiſon to my Ears! What do I hear?

Cynth. Nay, good my Lord, forbear Reſentment, let us hear it out.

Lord *Touchw.* Yes, I will contain, though I could burſt.

Maſkw. I, that had wantoned in the rich Circle of your World of Love, could be confined within the puny Province of a Girl? No—Yet, though I dote on each laſt Favour more than all the reſt; though I would give a Limb for every Look you cheaply throw away on any other Object of your Love; yet ſo far I prize your Pleaſures over my own, that all this ſeeming Plot that I have laid, has been to gratify your Taſte, and cheat the World, to prove a faithful Rogue to you.

Lady *Touchw.* If this were true—But how can it be?

Maſkw. I have ſo contrived, that *Melleſont* will preſently, in the Chaplain's Habit, wait for *Cynthia* in your Dreſſing-room; but I have put the Change upon her, that ſhe may be other-where employed.—Do you procure her Night-gown, and, with your Hoods tied over your Face, meet him in her Stead; you may go privately by the Back Stairs, and, unperceived, there you may propoſe to reinſtate him in his Uncle's Favour, if he'll comply with your Deſires. His Caſe is deſperate, and I believe he'll yield to any Conditions—If not, here take this; you may employ it better, than in the Heart of one who is nothing when not yours. [*Gives the Dagger.*

Lady *Touchw.* Thou canſt deceive every body.—Nay, thou haſt deceived me; but it is as I would wiſh. Truſty Villain! I could worſhip thee.—

Maſkw. No more.—It wants but a few Minutes of the Time; and *Melleſont's* Love will carry him there before his Hour.

Lady *Touchw.* I go, I fly, incomparable *Maſkwell!*

SCENE

SCENE XVIII.

MASKWELL, CYNTHIA, *Lord* TOUCHWOOD.

Maſkw. So, this was a Pinch indeed; my Invention was upon the Rack; and made Diſcovery of her laſt Plot: I hope *Cynthia* and my Chaplain will be ready: I'll prepare for the Expedition. [*Exit.*

SCENE XIX.

CYNTHIA, *and Lord* TOUCHWOOD.

Cynth. Now, my Lord?

Lord *Touchw.* Aſtoniſhment binds up my Rage! Villainy upon Villainy! Heavens, what a long Track of dark Deceit has this diſcovered! I am confounded when I look back, and want a Clue to guide me through the various Mazes of unheard-of Treachery. My Wife! Damnation! my Hell!

Cynth. My Lord, have Patience; and be ſenſible how great our Happineſs is, that this Diſcovery was not made too late.

Lord *Touchw.* I thank you; yet it may be ſtill too late, if we don't preſently prevent the Execution of their Plots.—Ha! I'll do it. Where is *Melleſont*, my poor injured Nephew?—how ſhall I make him ample Satisfaction?—

Cynth. I dare anſwer for him.

Lord *Touchw.* I do him freſh Wrong, to queſtion his Forgiveneſs; for I know him to be all Goodneſs. —Yet my Wife! Damn her.—She'll think to meet him in that Dreſſing-room—was it not ſo? And *Maſkwell* will expect you in the Chaplain's Chamber. —For once, I'll add my Plot too.—Let us haſte to find out, and inform my Nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the Company into this Gallery.—I'll expoſe the Strumpet and the Villain.

SCENE

SCENE XX.

Lord FROTH, *and Sir* PAUL PLYANT.

Lord *Froth.* By Heavens, I have ſlept an Age.—Sir *Paul*, what a Clock is it! Paſt Eight, on my Conſcience. My Lady's is the moſt inviting Couch; and a Slumber there is the prettieſt Amuſement!—But where's all the Company?

Sir *P. Pl.* The Company, gads-bud! I don't know, my Lord; but here's the ſtrangeſt Revolution; all turned topſy turvy, as I hope for Providence.

Lord *Froth.* O Heavens! what's the Matter? where's my Wife?

Sir *P. Pl.* All turned topſy turvy, as ſure as a Gun.

Lord *Froth.* How do you mean? my Wife!

Sir *P. Pl.* The ſtrangeſt Poſture of Affairs!

Lord *Froth.* What, my Wife?

Sir *P. Pl.* No, no, I mean the Family.—Your Lady's Affairs may be in a very good Poſture; I ſaw her go into the Garden with Mr. *Briſk*.

Lord *Froth.* How? where? when? what to do?

Sir *P. Pl.* I ſuppoſe they have been laying their Heads together.

Lord *Froth.* How?

Sir *P. Pl.* Nay, only about Poetry, I ſuppoſe, my Lord; making Couplets.

Lord *Froth.* Couplets!

Sir *P. Pl.* O, here they come.

SCENE XXI.

[*To them*] *Lady* FROTH, BRISK.

Briſk. My Lord, your humble Servant; Sir *Paul*, yours—the ſweeteſt Night!

Lady *Froth.* My Dear, Mr. *Briſk* and I have been Star-gazing, I don't know how long.

Sir

Sir *P. Pl.* Does it not tire your Ladyſhip? are not you weary with looking up?

Lady *Froth.* Oh, no, I love it violently—My Dear, you're melancholy.

Lord *Froth.* No, my Dear; I'm but juſt awake.

Lady *Froth.* Snuff ſome of my Spirit of Hartſhorn.

Lord *Froth.* I've ſome of my own, thank you, my Dear.

Lady *Froth.* Well, I ſwear, Mr. *Briſk*, you underſtood Aſtronomy like an old *Egyptian*.

Briſk. Not comparably to your Ladyſhip; you are the very *Cynthia* of the Skies, and Queen of Stars.

Lady *Froth.* That's becauſe I have no Light but what's by Reflection from you, who are the Sun.

Briſk. Madam, you have eclipſed me quite, let me periſh.—I can't anſwer that.

Lady *Froth.* No matter—harkye, ſhall you and I make an Almanack together?

Briſk. With all my Soul—your Ladyſhip has made me the Man in't already, I'm ſo full of the Wounds which you have given.

Lady *Froth.* O finely taken! I ſwear now you are even with me. O *Parnaſſus!* you have an infinite deal of Wit.

Sir *P. Pl.* So he has, Gads-bud! and ſo has your Ladyſhip.

SCENE XXII.

[*To them*] *Lady* PLYANT, CARELESS, CYNTHIA.

Lady *Pl.* You tell me moſt ſurprizing Things. bleſs me, who would ever truſt a Man? O my Heart akes for fear they ſhould be all deceitful alike.

Carel. You need not fear, Madam; you have Charms to fix Inconſtancy itſelf.

Lady *Pl.* O dear, you make me bluſh.

Lord *Froth.* Come, my Dear, ſhall we take leave of my Lord and Lady?

Cynth.

Cynth. They'll wait upon your Lordſhip preſently.

Lady *Froth.* Mr. *Briſk*, my Coach ſhall ſet you down.

[*A great Shriek from the Corner of the Stage.*

All. What's the Matter?

SCENE XXIII.

[*To them*] *Lady* TOUCHWOOD *runs out affrighted; my Lord after her, like a Parſon.*

Lady *Touchw.* O, I'm betrayed.—Save me, help me!

Lord *Touchw.* Now, what Evaſion, Strumpet?

Lady *Touchw.* Stand off, let me go.

Lord *Touchw.* Go, and thy own Infamy purſue thee.—You ſtare as you were all amazed.—I don't wonder at it—but too ſoon you'll know mine, and that Woman's Shame.

SCENE *The Laſt.*

Lord TOUCHWOOD, *Lord* FROTH, *Lady* FROTH, *Lady* PLYANT, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, CYNTHIA, MELLEFONT, MASKWELL; MELLEFONT *diſguiſed in a Parſon's Habit, and pulling in* MASKWELL.

Mellef. Nay, by Heaven, you ſhall be ſeen.—*Careleſs*, your Hand.—Do you hold down your Head? Yes, I am your Chaplain. Look in the Face of your injured Friend; thou Wonder of all Falſehood.

Lord *Touchw.* Are you ſilent, Monſter?

Mellef. Good Heavens! how I believed and loved this Man!—Take him hence, for he's a Diſeaſe to my Sight.

Lord *Touchw.* Secure that manifold Villain.

[*Servants ſeize him.*

Carel. Miracle of Ingratitude!

Briſk. This is all very ſurprizing, let me periſh.

Lady *Froth.* You know I told you *Saturn* looked a little more angry than uſual.

Lord *Touchw.* We'll think of Puniſhment at Leiſure; but let me haſten to do Juſtice, in rewarding Virtue and wronged Innocence.—Nephew, I hope I have your Pardon, and *Cynthia's.*

Melleſ. We are your Lordſhip's Creatures.

Lord *Touchw.* And be each other's Comfort.—Let me join your Hands.—Unwearied Nights and wiſhing Days attend you both! Mutual Love, laſting Health, and circling Joys, tread round each happy Year of your long Lives!

Let ſecret Villainy from hence be warn'd
How'e'er in private Miſchiefs are conceiv'd,
Torture and Shame attend their open Birth;
Like Vipers in the Womb, baſe Treachery lies,
Still gnawing that whence firſt it did ariſe;
No ſooner born, but the vile Parent dies!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. MOUNTFORD.

COULD Poets but foreſee how Plays would take,
Then they could tell what Epilogues to make;
Whether to thank or blame their Audience moſt.
But that late Knowledge does much Hazard coſt:
Till Dice are thrown, there's nothing won, nor loſt.
So till the Thief has ſtol'n, he cannot know
Whether he ſhall eſcape the Law, or no.
But Poets run much greater Hazards far,
Than they who ſtand their Trials at the Bar;
The Law provides a Curb for its own Fury,
And ſuffers Judges to direct the Jury.
But in this Court, what Difference does appear!
For every one's both Judge and Jury here;
Nay, and what's worſe, an Executioner!
All have a Right and Title to ſome Part,
Each chuſing that in which he has moſt Art.
The dreadful Men of Learning all confound,
Unleſs the Fable's good, and Moral ſound.
The Vizor Maſks, that are in Pit and Gallery,
Approve, or damn, the Repartee and Raillery.
The Lady Critics, who are better read,
Enquire if Characters are nicely bred;
If the ſoft Things are penn'd and ſpoke with Grace:
They judge of Action too, and Time, and Place;
In which we do not doubt but they're diſcerning,
For that's a Kind of Aſſignation Learning.
Beaux judge of Dreſs; the Witlings judge of Songs;
The Cuckoldom, of ancient Right, to Cits belongs.

Poor

Poor Poets thus the Favour are denied,
Even to make Exceptions, when they're tried.
'Tis hard that they muſt every one admit:
Methinks I ſee ſome Faces in the Pit,
Which muſt of Conſequence be Foes to Wit.
You who can judge, to Sentence may proceed;
But, though he cannot write, let him be freed
At leaſt from their Contempt who cannot read.

LOVE

F. Hayman inv. et del. C. Grignion Sculpt.

Love for Love.

LOVE FOR LOVE,

A

COMEDY.

Nudus agris, nudus nummis paternis,
Insanire parat certa ratione modoque. HOR.

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES,

Earl of DORSET and MIDDLESEX.

Lord Chamberlain of His Majeſty's Houſhold, and Knight of the Moſt Noble Order of the Garter, &c.

MY LORD,

A Young Poet is liable to the ſame Vanity and Indiſcretion with a young Lover; and the great Man who ſmiles upon one, and the fine Woman who looks kindly upon the other, are both of them in Danger of having the Favour publiſhed with the firſt Opportunity.

But there may be a different Motive, which will a little diſtinguiſh the Offenders. For, though one ſhould have a Vanity in ruining another's Reputation, yet the other may only have an Ambition to advance his own. And I beg Leave, my Lord, that

I may plead the latter, both as the Cauſe and Excuſe of this Dedication.

Whoever is King, is alſo the Father of his Country; and as nobody can diſpute your Lordſhip's *Monarchy* in *Poetry*; ſo all that are concerned ought to acknowledge your univerſal Patronage: and it is only preſuming on the Privilege of a loyal Subject, that I have ventured to make this my Addreſs of Thanks to your Lordſhip; which at the ſame Time includes a Prayer your Protection.

I am not ignorant of the common Form of Poetical Dedications, which are generally made up of Panegyric, where the Authors endeavour to diſtinguiſh their Patrons, by the ſhining Characters they give them, above other Men. But that, my Lord, is not my Buſineſs at this Time; nor is your Lordſhip *now* to be diſtinguiſhed. I am contented with the Honour I do myſelf in this Epiſtle; without the Vanity of attempting to add to, or explain, your Lordſhip's Character.

I confeſs, it is not without ſome Struggling, that I behaved myſelf, in this Caſe, as I ought: for it is very hard to be pleaſed with a Subject, and yet forbear it. But I chuſe rather to follow *Pliny's* Precept, than his Example, when in his Panegyrick to the Emperor *Trajan*, he ſays, *Nec minus conſiderabo quid aures ejus pati poſſint, quam quid virtutibus debeatur.*

I hope I may be excuſed the Pedantry of a Quotation, when it is ſo juſtly applied. Here are ſome Lines in the Print (and which your Lordſhip read before this Play was acted) that were omitted on the Stage; and particularly one whole Scene in the Third Act, which not only helps the Deſign forward with leſs Precipitation, but alſo heightens the ridiculous Character of *Foreſight*, which indeed ſeems to be maimed without it. But I found myſelf in great Danger of a long Play, and was glad to help it where I could.

I could. Though, notwithſtanding my Care, and the kind Reception it had from the Town; I could heartily wiſh it yet ſhorter: but the number of different Characters repreſented in it would have been too much crowded in leſs Room.

This Reflection on Prolixity (a Fault for which ſcarce any one Beauty will atone) warns me not to be tedious now, and detain Your Lordſhip any longer with the Trifles of,

My LORD,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt Obedient and

Moſt Humble Servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken at the Opening of the New Houſe,

By Mr. BETTERTON.

THE Huſbandman in vain renews his Toil,
To cultivate each Year a hungry Soil;
And fondly hopes for rich and generous Fruit,
When what ſhould feed the Tree, devours the Root:
Th' unladen Boughs, he ſees, bode certain Dearth,
Unleſs tranſplanted to more kindly Earth.
So, the poor Huſbands of the Stage, who found
Their Labours loſt upon ungrateful Ground,
This laſt and only Remedy have prov'd;
And hope new Fruit from ancient Stocks remov'd.
Well may they hope, when you ſo kindly aid,
Well plant a Soil, which you ſo rich have made.
As Nature gave the World to Man's firſt Age,
So from your Bounty we receive this Stage;
The Freedom Man was born to, you've reſtor'd,
And to our World ſuch Plenty you afford,
It ſeems, like Eden, *fruitful of its own Accord.*
But ſince in Paradiſe *frail Fleſh gave Way,*
And when but two were made, both went aſtray;
Forbear your Wonder, and the Fault forgive,
If, in our larger Family, we grieve
One falling Adam, *and one tempted* Eve.
We who remain would gratefully repay,
What our Endeavours can, and bring this Day,
The Firſt-fruit Offering, of a Virgin Play,
We hope th're's ſomething that may pleaſe each Taſte,
And tho' of homely Fare we make the Feaſt,
Yet you will find Variety at leaſt.

There's

There's Humour, which for chearful Friends we got,
And for the thinking Party there's a Plot.
We've ſomething too, to gratify Ill-nature
(If there be any here)—and that is Satire.
Tho' Satire ſcarce dares grin, 'tis grown ſo mild,
Or only ſhews its Teeth, as if it ſmil'd.
As Aſſes Thiſtles, Poets mumble Wit,
And dare not bite, for fear of being bit.
They hold their Pens, as Swords are held by Fools,
And are afraid to uſe their own Edge-tools.
Since the Plain-Dealer's *Scenes of manly Rage,*
Not one has dar'd to laſh this crying Age.
This Time, the Poet owns the bold Eſſay,
Yet hopes there's no Ill-manners in his Play:
And he declares by me, he has deſign'd
Affront to none; but frankly ſpeaks his Mind.
And, ſhould th' enſuing Scenes not chance to hit,
He offers but this one Excuſe—'twas writ
Before your late Encouragement of Wit.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken at the Opening of the New Houſe,

By Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

SURE Providence at firſt deſign'd this Place
To be the Player's Refuge in Diſtreſs;
For ſtill, in every Storm, they all run hither,
As to a Shed, that ſhields them from the Weather.
But thinking of this Change which laſt befel us,
It's like what I have heard our Poets tell us:
For when behind our Scenes their Suits are pleading,
To help their Love, ſometimes they ſhew their Reading;
And, wanting Ready Caſh to pay for Hearts,
They top their Learning on us, and their Parts.
Once of Philoſophers they told us Stories,
Whom, as I think, they called—Py—Pythagories,
I'm ſure 'tis ſome ſuch Latin *Name they give them,*
And we, who know no better, muſt believe them.
Now to theſe Men (ſay they) ſuch Souls were given,
That after, Death, ne'er went to Hell nor Heaven,
But liv'd, I know not how, in Beaſts; and then
When many Years were paſt, in Men again.
Methinks, we Players reſemble ſuch a Soul,
That, does from Bodies; we, from Houſes ſtrole.
Thus Ariſtotle's *Soul, of old that was,*
May now be damn'd to animate an Aſs;
Or in this very Houſe, for aught we know,
Is doing painful Penance in ſome Beau:
And thus, our Audience, which did once reſort
To ſhining Theatres, to ſee our Sport,
Now find us toſs'd into a Tennis-Court.
Theſe Walls but t'other Day were fill'd with Noiſe
Of Roaring Gameſters, and your Damme Boys;

Then

Then bounding Balls and Rackets they encompaſs;
And now they're fill'd with Jeſts, and Flights, and Bombaſt!
I vow, I don't much like this Tranſmigration,
Stroling from Place to Place, by Circulation;
Grant Heaven, we don't return to our firſt Station!
I know not what theſe think; but, for my Part,
I can't reflect without an aking Heart,
How we ſhould end in, our Original, a Cart.
But we can't fear, ſince you're ſo good to ſave us,
That you have only ſet us up, to leave us.
Thus, from the paſt, we hope for future Grace,
I beg it—
And ſome here know I have a begging Face.
Then pray continue this your kind Behaviour;
For a clear Stage won't do, without your Favour.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, 1774.

M E N.	COVENT-GARDEN.
Sir *Samſon Legend*, Father to *Valentine* and *Ben*,	Mr. DUNSTALL.
Valentine, fallen under his Father's Diſpleaſure by his expenſive Way of living, in Love with *Angelica*,	Mr. LEWIS.
Scandal, his Friend, a free Speaker,	Mr. HULL.
Tattle, a half-witted Beau, vain of his Amours, yet valuing himſelf for Secrecy,	Mr. WOODWARD.
Ben, Sir *Samſon's* younger Son, half home-bred, and half ſea-bred, deſigned to marry Miſs *Prue*.	Mr. SHUTER.
Foreſight, an illiterate old Fellow, peeviſh and poſitive, ſuperſtitious, and pretending to underſtand Aſtrology, Palmiſtry, Phyſiognomy, Omens, Dreams, &c. Uncle to *Angelica*,	Mr. CUSHING.
Jeremy, Servant to *Valentine*,	Mr. LEWES.
Trapland, a Scrivener,	Mr. QUICK.
Buckram, a Lawyer.	
W O M E N.	
Angelica, Niece to *Foreſight*, of a conſiderable Fortune in her own Hands,	Miſs SHERMAN.
Mrs. *Foreſight*, ſecond Wife to *Foreſight*,	Mrs. BAKER.
Mrs. *Frail*, Siſter to Mrs. *Foreſight*, a Woman of the Town,	Miſs BARSANTI.
Miſs *Prue*, Daughter to *Foreſight* by a former Wife, a ſilly, aukward Country Girl,	Mrs. MATTOCKS.
Nurſe to Miſs,	Mrs. PITT.
Jenny.	

A Steward, Officers, Sailors, and ſeveral Servants.

The SCENE, LONDON.

LOVE

LOVE FOR LOVE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

VALENTINE, *in his Chamber, reading*; JEREMY *waiting*.

Several Books upon the Table.

Valent. JEREMY!

Jer. Sir.

Valent. Here, take away; I'll walk a Turn, and digeſt what I have read—

Jer. You'll grow deviliſh fat upon this Paper-diet! [*Aſide, and taking away the Books.*

Valent. And, d'ye hear, go you to Breakfaſt—There's a Page doubled down in *Epictetus*, that is a Feaſt for an Emperor.

Jer. Was *Epictetus* a real Cook, or did he only write Receipts?

Valent. Read, read, Sirrah, and refine your Appetite; learn to live upon Inſtruction; feaſt your Mind, and mortify your Fleſh. Read, and take your Nouriſhment in at your Eyes; ſhut up your Mouth, and chew the Cud of Underſtanding. So *Epictetus* adviſes.

Jer. O Lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a Gentleman at *Cambridge*. Pray what was that *Epictetus*?

Valent. A very rich Man—not worth a Groat.

Jer. Humph! and ſo he has made a very fine Feaſt, where there is nothing to be eaten.

Valent. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a Gentleman, and probably underſtand this fine Feeding: but, if you pleaſe, I had rather be at Board-wages. Does your *Epictetus*, or your *Seneca* here, or any of theſe poor rich Rogues, teach you how to pay your Debts without Money? will they ſhut up the Mouths of your Creditors? will *Plato* be Bail for you? or *Diogenes*, becauſe he underſtands Confinement, and lived in a Tub, go to Priſon for you? 'Slife, Sir, what do you mean, to mew yourſelf up here with three or four muſty Books, in Commendation of Starving and Poverty?

Valent. Why, Sirrah, I have no Money, you know it; and therefore reſolve to rail at all that have: And in that I but follow the Examples of the wiſeſt and wittieſt Men in all Ages—theſe Poets and Philoſophers, whom you naturally hate, for juſt ſuch another Reaſon; becauſe they abound in Senſe, and you are a Fool.

Jer. Ay, Sir, I am a Fool, I know it: and yet, Heaven help me, I'm poor enough to be a Wit.—But I was always a Fool, when I told you what your Expences would bring you to; your Coaches and your Liveries; your Treats and your Balls; your being in Love with a Lady that did not care a Farthing for you in your Proſperity; and keeping Company with Wits, that cared for nothing but your Proſperity, and now, when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Valent. Well; and now I am poor, I have an Opportunity to be revenged on them all; I'll purſue *Angelica* with more Love than ever, and appear more notoriouſly her Admirer in this Reſtraint, than when I openly rivaled the rich Fops that made Court to her. So ſhall my Poverty be a Mortification to her Pride, and perhaps make her compaſſionate the Love, which

has

has principally reduced me to this Lowneſs of Fortune. And for the Wits, I'm ſure I am in a Condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your Condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the Truth on't.

Valent. I'll take ſome of their Trade out of their Hands.

Jer. Now Heaven of Mercy continue the Tax upon Paper!—You don't mean to write?

Valent. Yes, I do; I'll write a Play.

Jer. Hem!—Sir, if you pleaſe to give me a ſmall Certificate of three Lines—only to certify thoſe whom it may concern, That the Bearer hereof, *Jeremy Fetch* by Name, has for the Space of ſeven Years truly and faithfully ſerved *Valentine Legend*, Eſquire; and that he is not now turned away for any Miſdemeanour; but does voluntarily diſmiſs his Maſter from any future Authority over him—

Valent. No, Sirrah; you ſhall live with me ſtill.

Jer. Sir, it's impoſſible—I may die with you, ſtarve with you, or be damned with your Works: But to live, even three Days, the Life of a Play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a Muſe after my Deceaſe.

Valent. You are witty, you Rogue, I ſhall want your Help—I'll have you learn to make Couplets, to tag the Ends of Acts. D'ye hear? get the Maids to cramboin an Evening, and learn the Knack of Rhiming; you may arrive at the Height of a Song ſent by an unknown Hand, or a Chocolate-houſe Lampoon.

Jer. But, Sir, is this the Way to recover your Father's Favour? Why Sir *Sampſon* will be irreconcileable. If your younger Brother ſhould come from Sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, Sir; you're ruined; you won't have a Friend left in the World, if you turn Poet.—Ah, 'Pox confound that *Will's* Coffee-houſe, it has ruined more young

young Men than the *Royal Oak* Lottery!—Nothing thrives that belongs to it. The Man of the Houſe would have been an Alderman by this Time with half the Trade, if he had ſet up in the City.—For my Part, I never ſit at the Door, that I don't get double the Stomach that I do at a Horſe-race. The Air upon *Banſtead-Downs* is nothing to it for a Whetter; yet I never ſee it, but the Spirit of Famine appears to me—Sometimes like a decayed Porter, worn out with Pimping, and carrying *Billet-doux* and Songs; not like other Porters for Hire, but for the Jeſt's Sake.—Now like a thin Chairman, melted down to half his Proportion, with carrying a Poet upon Tick, to viſit ſome great Fortune; and his Fare to be paid him, like the Wages of Sin, either at the Day of Marriage, or the Day of Death.

Valent. Very well, Sir; can you proceed?

Jer. Sometimes like a bilked Bookſeller, with a meagre terrified Countenance, that looks as if he had written for himſelf, or were reſolved to turn Author, and bring the reſt of his Brethren into the ſame Condition. And laſtly, in the Form of a worn-out Punk, with Verſes in her Hand, which her Vanity had preferred to Settlements, without a whole Tatter to her Tail, but as ragged as one of the Muſes; or as if ſhe were carrying her Linen to the Paper-mill, to be converted into Folio Books of Warning to all young Maids, not to prefer Poetry to good Senſe; or lying in the Arms of a needy Wit, before the Embraces of a wealthy Fool.

SCENE II.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, JEREMY.

Scand. What! *Jeremy* holding forth?

Valent. The Rogue has (with all the Wit he could muſter up) been declaiming againſt Wit.

Scand.

Scand. Ay? Why then I'm afraid *Jeremy* has Wit: For wherever it is, it's always contriving its own Ruin.

Jer. Why ſo I have been telling my Maſter, Sir. Mr. *Scandal*, for Heaven's Sake, Sir, try if you can diſſuade him from turning Poet.

Scand. Poet! He ſhall turn Soldier firſt, and rather depend upon the Out-ſide of his Head, than the Lining! Why, what the Devil! has not your Poverty made you Enemies enough? muſt you needs ſhew your Wit, to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed: for who cares for any body that has more Wit than himſelf?

Scand. Jeremy ſpeaks like an Oracle. Don't you ſee how worthleſs great Men and dull rich Rogues avoid a witty Man of ſmall Fortune? Why, he looks like a Writ of Inquiry into their Titles and Eſtates; and ſeems commiſſioned by Heaven to ſeize the better half.

Valent. Therefore I would rail in my Writings, and be revenged.

Scand. Rail? at whom? the whole World? Impotent and vain! Who would dye a Martyr to Senſe, in a Country where the Religion is Folly? You may ſtand at Bay for a while; but, when the full Cry is againſt you, you ſhan't have fair Play for your Life. If you can't be fairly run down by the Hounds, you will be treacherouſly ſhot by the Huntſmen.—No, turn Pimp, Flatterer, Quack, Lawyer, Parſon, be Chaplain to an Atheiſt, or Stallion to an old Woman, any Thing but Poet A modern Poet is Worſe, more ſervile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named: without you could retrieve the ancient Honours of the Name, recall the Stage of *Athens*, and be allowed the Force of open honeſt Satire.

Valent. You are as inveterate againſt our Poets, as if your Character had been lately expoſed upon the Stage.—Nay, I am not violently bent upon the Trade.—

Trade.—[*One knocks.*] *Jeremy*, ſee who's there. [Jer. *goes to the Door.*]—But tell me what you would have me do?—What do the World ſay of me, and my forced Confinement?

Scand. The World behaves itſelf, as it uſes to do on ſuch Occaſions. Some pity you, and condemn your Father: others excuſe him, and blame you. Only the Ladies are merciful, and wiſh you well: ſince Love and pleaſureable Expence have been your greateſt Faults.

[Jeremy *returns.*]

Valent. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, Sir. I have diſpatched ſome half a Dozen Duns with as much Dexterity as an hungry Judge does Cauſes at Dinner-time.

Valent. What Anſwer have you given them?

Scand. Patience, I ſuppoſe—the old Receipt!

Jer. No, faith, Sir: I have put them off ſo long with Patience and Forbearance, and other fair Words, that I was forced to tell them in plain downright *Engliſh*—

Valent. What?

Jer. That they ſhould be paid.

Valent. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Valent. And how the Devil do you mean to keep your Word?

Jer. Keep it? Not at all: it has been ſo very much ſtretched, that I reckon it will break of courſe by To-morrow, and nobody be ſurprized at the Matter'—[*Knocking.*]—Again! Sir, if you don't like my Negotiation, will you be pleaſed to anſwer theſe yourſelf?

Valent. See who they are.

SCENE III.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL.

Valent. By this, *Scandal*, you may ſee what it is to be great. Secretaries of State, Preſidents of the Council,

Council, and Generals of an Army, lead juſt ſuch a Life as I do; have juſt ſuch Crowds of Viſitants in a Morning, all ſoliciting of paſt Promiſes; which are but a civiler Sort of Duns, that lay Claim to voluntary Debts.

Scand. And you, like a truly great Man, having engaged their Attendance, and promiſed more than ever you intended to perform, are more perplexed to find Evaſions, than you would be to invent the honeſt Means of keeping your Word, and gratifying your Creditors.

Valent. Scandal, learn to ſpare your Friends, and do not provoke your Enemies. This Liberty of your Tongue will one Day bring a Confinement on your Body, my Friend.

SCENE IV.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, JEREMY.

Jer. O, Sir, there's *Trapland* the Scrivener, with two ſuſpicious Fellows like lawful Pads, that would knock a Man down with Pocket-tipſtaves!—And there's your Father's Steward; and the Nurſe, with one of your Children, from *Twit'nam*.

Valent. Pox on her! could ſhe find no other Time to fling my Sins in my Face? Here! give her this, [*gives Money*,] and bid her trouble me no more; a thoughtleſs, two-handed Whore! She knows my Condition well enough, and might have over-laid the Child a Fortnight ago, if ſhe had had any Forecaſt in her.

Scand. What, is it bouncing *Margery*, with my Godſon?

Jer. Yes, Sir.

Scand. My Bleſſing to the Boy, with this Token [*gives Money*] of my Love. And (d'ye hear?) bid *Margery* put more Flocks in her Bed, ſhift twice a Week,

Week, and not work ſo hard, that ſhe may not ſmell ſo vigorouſly.—I ſhall take the Air ſhortly.

Valent. Scandal, dont't ſpoil my Boy's Milk.—Bid *Trapland* come in. If I can give that *Cerberus* a Sop, I ſhall be at Reſt for one Day.

SCENE V.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, TRAPLAND, JEREMY.

Valent. O Mr. *Trapland!* my old Friend! welcome.—*Jeremy*, a Chair quickly: a Bottle of Sack and a Toaſt—fly—a Chair firſt.

Trapl. A good Morning to you, Mr. *Valentine*; and to you, Mr. *Scandal.*

Scand. The Morning's a very good Morning, if you don't ſpoil it.

Valent. Come, ſit you down; you know his Way.

Trapl. [*ſits.*] There is a Debt, Mr. *Valentine*, of Fifteen Hundred Pounds, of pretty long Standing—

Valent. I cannot talk about Buſineſs with a thirſty Palate.—Sirrah! the Sack!

Trapl. And I deſire to know what Courſe you have taken for the Payment?

Valent. Faith and troth, I am heartily glad to ſee you—my Service to you!—fill, fill, to honeſt Mr. *Trapland*—fuller!

Trapl. Hold! Sweetheart—this is not to our Buſineſs.—My Service to you, Mr. *Scandal!*—[*Drinks.*—I have forborn as long—

Valent. T'other Glaſs, and then we'll talk—Fill, *Jeremy.*

Trapl. No more, in Truth—I have forborn, I ſay—

Valent. Sirrah! fill! when I bid you. — And how does your handſome Daughter?—Come, a good Huſband to her! [*Drinks.*

Trapl. Thank you— I have been out of this Money—

Valent.

Valent. Drink firſt. *Scandal*, why do you not drink? [*They drink.*

Trapl. And, in ſhort, I can be put off no longer.

Valent. I was much obliged to you for your Supply: it did me ſignal Service in my Neceſſity. But you delight in doing Good.—*Scandal*, drink to me, my Friend *Trapland's* Health. An honeſter Man lives not, nor one more ready to ſerve his Friend in Diſtreſs; though I ſay it to his Face. Come, fill each Man his Glaſs.

Scand. What? I know *Trapland* has been a Whoremaſter, and loves a Wench ſtill. You never knew a Whoremaſter, that was not an honeſt Fellow.

Trapl. Fie, Mr. *Scandal*, you never knew!—

Scand. What don't I know?—I know the buxom black Widow in *The Poultry*—Eight Hundred Pounds a Year Jointure, and Twenty Thouſand Pounds in Money. Ahah! old *Trap!*

Valent. Say you ſo, i'faith? Come, we'll remember the Widow: I know whereabouts you are; come, to the Widow.

Trap. No more indeed.

Valent. What! the Widow's Health? Give it him—off with it. [*They drink.*]—A lovely Girl, i'faith, black ſparkling Eyes, ſoft pouting ruby Lips! Better ſealing there, than a Bond for a Million, ha!

Trap. No, no, there's no ſuch Thing; we'd better mind our Buſineſs—You're a Wag!

Valent. No, faith, we'll mind the Widow's Buſineſs: fill again.—Pretty round heaving Breaſts,—a *Barbary* Shape, and a Jut with her Bum, would ſtir an *Anchorite*, and the prettieſt Foot! Oh, if a Man could but faſten his Eyes to her Feet, as they ſteal in and out, and play at Bo-peep under her Petticoats—ha! Mr. *Trapland?*

Trap. Verily, give me a Glaſs—you're a Wag—and here's to the Widow. [*Drinks.*

Scan-

Scand. He begins to chuckle—ply him cloſe, or he'll elapſe into a Dun.

SCENE VI.

[*To them*] OFFICER.

Officer. By your Leave, Gentlemen.—Mr. *Trapland*, if we muſt do our Office, tell us.—We have Half a Dozen Gentlemen to arreſt in *Pall-Mall* and *Covent-Garden*; and if we don't make haſte, the Chairmen will be abroad, and block up the Chocolate-houſes; and then our Labour's loſt.

Trap. Udſo, that's true. Mr. *Valentine*, I love Mirth; but Buſineſs muſt be done; are you ready to—

Jer. Sir, your Father's Steward ſays, he comes to make Propoſals concerning your Debts.

Valent. Bid him come in: Mr. *Trapland*, ſend away your Officer; you ſhall have an Anſwer preſently.

Trap. Mr. *Snap*, ſtay within Call.

SCENE VII.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, TRAPLAND, JEREMY, STEWARD, *who whiſpers* VALENTINE.

Scand. Here's a Dog now, a Traitor in his Wine! Sirrah, refund the Sack: *Jeremy*, fetch him ſome warm Water; or I'll rip up his Stomach, and go the ſhorteſt Way to his Conſcience.

Trap. Mr. *Scandal*, you are uncivil. I did not value your Sack; but you cannot expect it again, when I have drunk it.

Scand. And how do you expect to have your Money again, when a Gentleman has ſpent it?

Valent. You need ſay no more. I underſtand the Conditions; they are very hard, but my Neceſſity is very preſſing: I agree to them. Take Mr. *Trapland* with

with you, and let him draw the Writing.—Mr. *Trapland*, you know this Man; he ſhall ſatisfy you.

Trap. Sincerely, I am loth to be thus preſſing; but my Neceſſity—

Valent. No Apology, good Mr. *Scrivener*; you ſhall be paid.

Trap. I hope you forgive me; my Buſineſs requires—

SCENE VIII.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL.

Scand. He begs Pardon, like a Hangman at an Execution.

Valent. But I have got a Reprieve.

Scand. I am ſurprized; what, does your Father relent?

Valent. No; he has ſent me the hardeſt Conditions in the World. You have heard of a Booby Brother of mine, that was ſent to Sea Three Years ago? This Brother, my Father hears, is landed; whereupon he very affectionately ſends me Word, "If I will make "a Deed of Conveyance of my Right to his Eſtate "after his Death to my younger Brother, he will "immediately furniſh me with Four Thouſand Pounds, "to pay my Debts, and make my Fortune." This was once propoſed before, and I refuſed it; but the preſent Impatience of my Creditors for their Money, and my own Impatience of Confinement, and Abſence from *Angelica*, force me to conſent.

Scand. A very deſperate Demonſtration of your Love to *Angelica*! and I think ſhe has never given you any Aſſurance of hers.

Valent. You know her Temper; ſhe never gave me any great Reaſon either for Hope or Deſpair.

Scand. Women of her airy Temper, as they ſeldom think before they act, ſo they rarely give us any Light to gueſs at what they mean: but you have little Reaſon

ſon to believe that a Woman of this Age, who has had an Indifference for you in your Proſperity, will fall in Love with your ill Fortune. Beſides, *Angelica* has a great Fortune of her own; and great Fortunes either expect another great Fortune, or a Fool.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] JEREMY.

Jer. More Misfortunes, Sir.

Valent. What, another Dun?

Jer. No, Sir; but Mr. *Tattle* is come to wait upon you.

Valent. Well, I cannot help it—you muſt bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad.

SCENE X.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL.

Scand. Pox on him, I'll be gone.

Valent. No, pr'ythee ſtay: *Tattle* and you ſhould never be aſunder; you are Light and Shadow, and ſhew one another. He is perfectly thy Reverſe both in Humour and Underſtanding; and as you ſet up for Defamation, he is a Mender of Reputations.

Scand. A Mender of Reputations! ay, juſt as he is a Keeper of Secrets, another Virtue that he ſets up for in the ſame Manner. For the Rogue will ſpeak aloud in the Poſture of a Whiſper; and deny a Woman's Name, while he gives you the Marks of her Perſon. He will forſwear receiving a Letter from her, and at the ſame Time ſhew you her Hand in the Superſcription: and yet perhaps he has counterfeited the Hand too, and ſworn to a Truth; but he hopes not to be believed; and refuſes the Reputation of a Lady's Favour, as a Doctor ſays No to a Biſhoprick, only that it may be granted him.—In ſhort, he is a public Pro-

Profeſſor of Secrecy, and makes Proclamation that he holds private Intelligence.—He is here.

SCENE XI.

[*To them*] TATTLE.

Tatt. Valentine, good Morrow: *Scandal*, I am yours —that is, when you ſpeak well of me.

Scand. That is, when I am yours; for while I am my own, or any body's elſe, that will never happen.

Tatt. How inhuman!

Valent. Why, *Tattle*, you need not be much concerned at any thing that he ſays: for to converſe with *Scandal*, is to play at *Loſing Loadum*; you muſt loſe a good Name to him, before you can win it for yourſelf.

Tatt. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the World ſhall think the better of any Perſon for his Calumniation!—I thank Heaven, it has always been a Part of my Character, to handle the Reputations of others very tenderly indeed.

Scand. Ay, ſuch rotten Reputations as you have to deal with are to be handled tenderly indeed.

Tatt. Nay, why rotten? why ſhould you ſay rotten, when you know not the Perſons of whom you ſpeak? How cruel that is!

Scan. Not know them? Why, thou never hadſt to do with any body that did not ſtink to all the Town.

Tatt. Ha, ha, ha! nay, now you make a Jeſt of it indeed. For there is nothing more known, than that nobody knows any thing of that Nature of me. As I hope to be ſaved, *Valentine*, I never expoſed a Woman, ſince I knew what Woman was.

Val. And yet you have converſed with ſeveral?

Tatt. To be free with you, I have—I don't care if I own that—nay more (I'm going to ſay a bold Word now) I never could meddle with a Woman, that had to do with any body elſe.

Scand. How!

Val. Nay, faith, I'm apt to believe him—except her Huſband, *Tattle.*

Tatt. Oh that—

Scand. What think you of that noble Commoner Mrs. *Drab?*

Tatt. Pooh, I know Madam *Drab* has made her Brags in three or four Places, that I ſaid this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but, upon my Reputation, ſhe did me wrong—well, well, that was Malice—but I know the Bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know—a Man too—only to bring me into Diſgrace with a certain Woman of Quality—

Scand. Whom we all know.

Tatt. No Matter for that—Yes, yes, every body knows—no doubt on't, every body knows my Secrets! —But I ſoon ſatisfied the Lady of my Innocence; for I told her—Madam, ſays I, there are ſome Perſons who make it their Buſineſs to tell Stories, and ſay this and that of one and the other, and every thing in the World; and, ſays I, if your Grace—

Scand. Grace!

Tatt. O Lord, what have I ſaid?—My unlucky Tongue!

Val. Ha, ha, ha!

Scand. Why, *Tattle,* thou haſt more Impudence than one can in Reaſon expect: I ſhall have an Eſteem for thee—well, and ha, ha, ha! well, go on, and what did you ſay to her Grace?

Val. I confeſs, this is ſomething extraordinary.

Tatt. Not a Word, as I hope to be ſaved; an arrant *Lapſus Linguæ!*—Come, let us talk of ſomething elſe.

Val. Well, but how did you acquit yourſelf?

Tatt. Pooh, pooh, nothing at all, I only raillied with you.—A Woman of ordinary Rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her ſomething or other—faith, I know not what.—Come, let's talk of ſomething elſe. [*Hums a Song.*

Scand.

Scand. Hang him, let him alone; he has a Mind we ſhould inquire.

Tatt. Valentine, I ſupped laſt Night with your Miſtreſs, and her Uncle old *Foreſight*: I think your Father lies at *Foreſight's*.

Val. Yes.

Tatt. Upon my Soul, *Angelica's* a fine Woman.—And ſo is Mrs. *Foreſight*, and her Siſter Mrs. *Frail*.

Scand. Yes, Mrs. *Frail* is a very fine Woman; we all know her.

Tatt. Oh, that is not fair.

Scand. What?

Tatt. To tell.

Scand. To tell what? Why, what do you know of Mrs. *Frail*?

Tat. Who I? Upon Honour I don't know whether ſhe be Man or Woman; but by the Smoothneſs of her Chin, and Roundneſs of her Hips.

Scand. No!

Tatt. No.

Scand. She ſays otherwiſe.

Tatt. Impoſſible!

Scand. Yes, Faith. Aſk *Valentine* elſe.

Tatt. Why then, as I hope to be ſaved, I believe a Woman only obliges a Man to Secrecy, that ſhe may have the Pleaſure of telling herſelf.

Scand. No doubt on it. Well, but has ſhe done you Wrong, or no? You have had her? ha?

Tatt. Though I have more Honour than to tell firſt; I have more Manners than to contradict what a Lady has declared.

Scand. Well, you own it?

Tatt. I am ſtrangely ſurprized! Yes, yes, I cannot deny it, if ſhe taxes me with it.

Scand. She'll be here by and by; ſhe ſees *Valentine* every Morning.

Tatt. How!

Val. She does me the Favour—I mean, of a Viſit ſometimes. I did not think ſhe had granted more to any body.

Scand. Nor I, faith.—But *Tattle* does not uſe to belie a Lady; it is contrary to his Character.—How one may be deceived in a Woman, *Valentine!*

Tatt. Nay, what do you mean, Gentlemen?

Scand. I'm reſolved I'll aſk her.

Tatt. O barbarous! Why did you not tell me—

Scand. No, you told us.

Tatt. And bid me aſk *Valentine?*

Val. What did I ſay? I hope you won't bring me to confeſs an Anſwer, when you never aſked me the Queſtion!

Tatt. But, Gentlemen, this is the moſt inhuman Proceeding.—

Val. Nay, if you have known *Scandal* thus long, and cannot avoid ſuch a palpable Decoy as this was; the Ladies have a fine Time, whoſe Reputations are in your Keeping.

SCENE XII.

[*To them*] JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, Mrs. *Frail* has ſent, to know if you are ſtirring.

Val. Shew her up when ſhe comes.

SCENE XIII.

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, TATTLE.

Tatt. I'll be gone.

Val. You'll meet her.

Tatt. Is there not a back Way?

Val. If there were, you have more Diſcretion than to give *Scandal* ſuch an Advantage; why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

Tatt.

Tatt. Scandal, you will not be ſo ungenerous.—O, I ſhall loſe my Reputation of Secrecy for ever.—I ſhall never be received but upon public Days; and my Viſits will never be admitted beyond a Drawing-room: I ſhall never ſee a Bed-chamber again, never be locked in a Cloſet, nor run behind a Screen, or under a Table; never be diſtinguiſhed among the Waiting-women by the Name of Truſty Mr. *Tattle* more.—You will not be ſo cruel?

Val. Scandal, have Pity on him; he'll yield to any Conditions.

Tatt. Any, any Terms.

Scand. Come then, ſacrifice half a Dozen Women of good Reputation to me preſently.—Come, where are you familiar?—And ſee that they are Women of Quality too, the firſt Quality.

Tatt. 'Tis very hard.—Won't a Baronet's Lady paſs?

Scand. No, nothing under a Right Honourable.

Tatt. O inhuman! You don't expect their Names?

Scan. No, their Titles ſhall ſerve.

Tatt. Alas, that is the ſame Thing. Pray ſpare me their Titles; I'll deſcribe their Perſons.

Scan. Well, begin then. But take notice, if you are ſo ill a Painter, that I cannot know the Perſon by your Picture of her, you muſt be condemned, like other bad Painters, to write the Name at the Bottom.

Tatt. Well, firſt then—

SCENE XIV.

[*To them*] *Mrs.* FRAIL.

Tatt. O unfortunate! ſhe's come already. Will you have Patience till another Time?—I'll double the Number.

Scand. Well, on that Condition—Take heed you don't fail me.

Mrs. *Frail.* I ſhall get a fine Reputation, by coming to ſee Fellows in a Morning! *Scandal*, you Devil, are you here too? Oh, Mr. *Tattle*, every thing is ſafe with you, we know.

Scand. Tattle!

Tatt. Mum—O, Madam, you do me too much Honour.

Valent. Well, Lady Galloper, how does *Angelica*?

Mrs. *Frail. Angelica*?—Manners!

Valent. What, you will allow an abſent Lover—

Mrs. *Frail.* No, I'll allow a Lover preſent with his Miſtreſs to be particular—but otherwiſe I think his Paſſion ought to give Place to his Manners.

Valent. But what if he has more Paſſion than Manners?

Mrs. *Frail.* Then let him marry, and reform.

Valent. Marriage indeed may qualify the Fury of his Paſſion; but it very rarely mends a Man's Manners.

Mrs. *Frail.* You are the moſt miſtaken in the World; there is no Creature perfectly civil, but a Huſband: for in a little Time he grows only rude to his Wife; and that is the higheſt Good-breeding, for it begets his Civility to other People. Well, I'll tell you News; but, I ſuppoſe, you hear your Brother *Benjamin* is landed. And my Brother *Foreſight's* Daughter is come out of the Country—I aſſure you, there's a Match talked of by the old People.—Well, if he be but as great a Sea-beaſt, as ſhe is a Land-monſter, we ſhall have a moſt amphibious Breed—the Progeny will be all Otters: he has been bred at Sea, and ſhe has never been out of the Country.

Valent. Pox take them! their Conjunction bodes me no good, I'm ſure.

Mrs. *Frail.* Now you talk of Conjunction, my Brother *Foreſight* has caſt both their Nativities, and prognoſticates an Admiral and an eminent Juſtice of the Peace to be the Iſſue Male of their two Bodies.

'Tis

'Tis the moſt ſuperſtitious old Fool! He would have perſuaded me, that this was an unlucky Day, and would not let me come abroad: but I invented a Dream, and ſent him to *Artemidorus* for Interpretation, and ſo ſtole out to ſee you. Well, and what will you give me now? Come, I muſt have ſomething.

Valent. Step into the next Room—and I'll give you ſomething.

Scand. Ay, we'll all give you ſomething.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, what will you all give me?

Valent. Mine's a Secret.

Mrs. *Frail.* I thought you would give me ſomething that would be a Trouble to you to keep.

Valent. And *Scandal* ſhall give you a good Name.

Mrs. *Frail.* That's more than he has for himſelf. And what will you give me, Mr. *Tattle?*

Tatt. I? My Soul, Madam.

Mrs. *Frail.* Pooh, no, I thank you, I have enough to do to take Care of my own. Well; but I'll come and ſee you one of theſe Mornings: I hear, you have a great many Pictures.

Tatt. I have a pretty good Collection, at your Service; ſome Originals.

Scand. Hang him, he has nothing but the *Seaſons* and the *Twelve Cæſars*, paltry Copies; and the *Five Senſes*, as ill repreſented as they are in himſelf: and he himſelf is the only Original you will ſee there.

Mrs. *Frail.* Ay, but I hear he has a Cloſet of Beauties.

Scand. Yes, all that have done him Favours, if you will believe him.

Mrs. *Frail.* Ay, let me ſee thoſe, Mr. *Tattle.*

Tatt. Oh, Madam, thoſe are ſacred to Love and Contemplation. No Man but the Painter and myſelf was ever bleſt with the Sight.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, but a Woman—

Tatt. Nor Woman, till ſhe conſented to have her Picture there too—for then ſhe is obliged to keep the Secret.

Scand. No, no; come to me if you'd ſee Pictures.

Mrs. *Frail.* You?

Scand. Yes, Faith, I can ſhew you your own Picture, and moſt of your Acquaintance, to the Life, and as like as at *Kneller's*.

Mrs. *Frail.* O lying Creature!—*Valentine*, does not he lie?—I can't believe a Word he ſays.

Valent. No, indeed, he ſpeaks Truth now: for, as *Tattle* has Pictures of all that have granted him Favours, he has the Pictures of all that have refuſed him—in Satires, Deſcriptions, Characters, and Lampoons, are Pictures.

Scand. Yes, mine are moſt in black and white—and yet there are ſome ſet out in their true Colours, both Men and Women. I can ſhew you Pride, Folly, Affectation, Wantonneſs, Inconſtancy, Covetouſneſs, Diſſimulation, Malice, and Ignorance, all in one Piece. Then I can ſhew you Lying, Foppery, Vanity, Cowardice, Bragging, Lechery, Impotence, and Ugline's, in another Piece; and yet one of theſe is a celebrated Beauty, and t'other a profeſſed Beau. I have Paintings too, ſome pleaſant enough.

Mrs. *Frail.* Come, let's hear them.

Scand. Why, I have a Beau in a Bagnio, cupping for a Complexion, and ſweating for a Shape.

Mrs. *Frail.* So!

Scand. Then I have a Lady burning Brandy in a Cellar with a Hackney-coachman.

Mrs. *Frail.* O Devil! Well, but that Story is not true.

Scand. I have ſome Hieroglyphicks too. I have a Lawyer, with a hundred Hands, two Heads, and but one Face; a Divine, with two Faces, and one Head; and I have a Soldier, with his Brains in his Belly, and his Heart where his Head ſhould be.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Frail.* And no Head?

Scand. No Head.

Mrs. *Frail.* Pooh, this is all Invention. Have you never a Poet?

Scandal. Yes, I have a Poet, weighing Words, and ſelling Praiſe for Praiſe; and a Critick, picking his Pocket. I have another large Piece too, repreſenting a School; where there are huge-proportioned Criticks, with long Wiggs, laced Coats, *Sattukirk* Cravats, and terrible Faces; with Catcalls in their Hands, and Horn-books about their Necks. I have many more of this Kind, very well painted, as you ſhall ſee.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, I'll come, if it be but to diſprove you.

SCENE XV.

[*To them*] JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, here's the Steward again from your Father.

Valent. I'll come to him.—Will you give me Leave? I'll wait on you again preſently.

Mrs. *Frail.* No, I'll be gone. Come, who ſquires me to *The Exchange?* I muſt call on my Siſter *Foreſight* there.

Scand. I will: I have a Mind to your Siſter.

Mrs. *Frail.* Civil!

Tatt. I will; becauſe I have a *Tendre* for your Ladyſhip.

Mrs. *Frail.* That's ſomewhat the better Reaſon, to my Opinion.

Scand. Well, if *Tattle* entertains you, I have the better Opportunity to engage your Siſter.

Valent. Tell *Angelica*, I am about making hard Conditions, to come abroad, and be at Liberty to ſee her.

Scand. I'll give an Account of you and your Proceedings. If Indiſcretion be a Sign of Love, you are the moſt a Lover of any body that I know. You

fancy that parting with your Eſtate will help you to your Miſtreſs.—In my Mind, he is a thoughtleſs Adventurer,

Who hopes to purchaſe Wealth by ſelling Land;
Or win a Miſtreſs, with a loſing Hand.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Room in FORESIGHT's *Houſe.*

FORESIGHT *and* SERVANT.

Foreſ. HEY-DAY! What, are all the Women of my Family abroad? Is not my Wife come home? nor my Siſter? nor my Daughter?

Serv. No, Sir.

Foreſ. Mercy on us! what can be the Meaning of it? Sure the Moon is in all her Fortitudes! Is my Niece *Angelica* at Home?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Foreſ. I believe you lie, Sir.

Serv. Sir?

Foreſ. I ſay, you lie, Sir. It is impoſſible that any Thing ſhould be as I would have it; for I was born, Sir, when the Crab was aſcending; and all my Affairs go backward.

Serv. I can't tell indeed, Sir.

Foreſ. No, I know you can't, Sir. But I can tell, and foretell, Sir.

SCENE

SCENE II.

[*To them*] NURSE.

Foreſ. *Nurſe*, where's your young Miſtreſs?

Nurſe. Wee'ſt Heart! I know not, they're none of them come Home yet. Poor Child, I warrant ſhe's fond of ſeeing the Town!—Marry, pray Heaven they have given her any Dinner!—Good lack-a-day, ha, ha, ha! O ſtrange; I'll vow and ſwear now, ha, ha, ha! marry, and did you ever ſee the like?

Foreſ. Why, how now? what's the Matter?

Nurſe. Pray Heaven ſend your Worſhip good Luck! marry, and Amen, with all my Heart! for you have put on one Stocking with the wrong Side outward.

Foreſ. Ha, how? Faith and troth, I'm glad of it: and ſo I have; that may be good Luck in troth; in troth it may, very good Luck: nay I have had ſome Omens. I got out of Bed backwards too this Morning, without Premeditation; pretty good that too. But then I ſtumbled coming down Stairs, and met a Weaſel; bad Omens thoſe! Some bad, ſome good; our Lives are checquered: Mirth and Sorrow, Want and Plenty, Night and Day, make up our Time.—But, in troth, I am pleaſed at my Stocking—very well pleaſed at my Stocking!—Oh, here's my Niece!—Sirrah, go tell Sir *Sampſon Legend* I'll wait on him if he's at leiſure.—'Tis now three o'Clock, a very good Hour for Buſineſs; *Mercury* governs this Hour.

SCENE III.

ANGELICA, FORESIGHT, NURSE.

Ang. Is it not a good Hour for Pleaſure too, Uncle? Pray lend me your Coach; mine's out of Order.

Foreſ. What, would you be gadding too? Sure all Females are mad To-day.—It is of evil Portent, and

bodes Miſchief to the Maſter of a Family.—I remember an old Prophecy, written by *Meſſahalah* the *Arabian*, and thus tranſlated by a Reverend *Buckinghamſhire* Bard:

When Houſe-wiſes all the Houſe forſake,
And leave good Men to brew and bake,
Without Gaile, then be it ſaid,
That Houſe doth ſtand upon its Head;
And when the Head is ſet in Ground,
No marl, if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful, the Head fruitful: that bodes Horns; the Fruit of the Head is Horns!—Dear Niece, ſtay at Home—for by the Head of the Houſe is meant the Huſband; the Prophecy needs no Explanation.

Ang. Well, but I can neither make you a Cuckold, Uncle, by going abroad; nor ſecure you from being one, by ſtaying at home.

Foreſ. Yes, yes; while there's one Woman left, the Prophecy is not in full Force.

Ang. But my Inclinations are in Force. I have a Mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your Coach, I'll take a Hackney, or a Chair; and leave you to erect a Scheme, and find who's in Conjunction with your Wife. Why don't you keep her at home, if you're jealous of her when ſhe's abroad? You know my Aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her Nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not Lord of the Aſcendant! ha, ha, ha!

Foreſ. Well, Jill-flirt, you are very pert—and always ridiculing that celeſtial Science.

Ang. Nay, Uncle, don't be angry.—If you are, I'll heap up all your falſe Prophecies, ridiculous Dreams, and idle Divinations. I'll ſwear, you are a Nuiſance to the Neighbourhood.—What a Buſtle did you keep againſt the laſt inviſible Eclipſe, laying in Proviſion as it were for a Siege! What a World of Fire and Candle,

Candle, Matches and Tinderboxes, did you purchaſe? One would have thought we were ever after to live under Ground; or at leaſt making a Voyage to *Greenland*, to inhabit there all the dark Seaſon.

Foreſ. Why, you malapert Slut!

Ang. Will you lend me your Coach? or I'll go on.—Nay, I'll declare how you propheſied Popery was coming, only becauſe the Butler had miſlaid ſome of the Apoſtle-Spoons, and thought they were loſt. Away went Religion and Spoon-meat together!—Indeed, Uncle, I'll indite you for a Wizard.

Foreſ. How, Huſſy! was there ever ſuch a provoking Minx?

Nurſe. O merciful Father, how ſhe talks!

Ang. Yes, I can make Oath of your unlawful Midnight Practices; you and the old Nurſe there.

Nurſe. Marry, Heaven defend!—I at Midnight Practices!—O Lord, what's here to do?—I in unlawful Doings with my Maſter's Worſhip!— Why, did you ever hear the like now?—Sir, did ever I do any Thing of your Midnight Concerns—but warm your Bed, and tuck you up, and ſet the Candle and your Tobacco-box and your Urinal by you, and now and then rub the Soles of your Feet?—O Lord, I!—

Ang. Yes, I ſaw you together, through the Key-hole of the Cloſet, one Night, like *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor*, turning the Sleve and Sheers, and pricking your Thumbs, to write poor innocent Servants Names in Blood, about a little Nutmeg-grater, which ſhe had forgot in the Candle-cup.—Nay, I know ſomething worſe, if I would ſpeak of it!

Foreſ. I defy you, Huſſy; but I'll remember this. I'll be revenged on you, Cockatrice; I'll hamper you.—You have your Fortune in your own Hands—but I'll find a Way to make your Lover, your prodigal Spendthrift Gallant, *Valentine*, pay for all, I will.

Ang. Will you? I care not; but all ſhall out then.—Look to it, Nurſe; I can bring Witneſs that you have

a great unnatural Teat under your Left Arm, and he another; and that you ſuckle a young Devil, in the Shape of a Tabby-cat, by Turns; I can.

Nurſe. A Teat, a Teat, I an unnatural Teat! O the falſe ſlanderous Thing! Feel, feel here, if I have any Thing but like another Chriſtian! [*Crying.*

Foreſ. I will have Patience, ſince it is the Will of the Stars I ſhould be thus tormented—this is the Effect of the malicious Conjunctions and Oppoſitions in the Third Houſe of my Nativity; there the Curſe of Kindred was foretold.—But I will have my Doors locked up—I'll puniſh you; not a Man ſhall enter my Houſe.

Ang. Do, Uncle, lock them up quickly, before my Aunt come home—you'll have a Letter for Alimony To morrow Morning!—But let me be gone firſt; and then let no Mankind come near the Houſe: but converſe with Spirits and the Celeſtial Signs, the Bull, and the Ram, and the Goat. Bleſs me! there are a great many horned Beaſts among the Twelve Signs, Uncle! But Cuckolds go to Heaven!

Foreſ. But there's but One Virgin among the Twelve Signs, Spit-fire!—but One Virgin!

Ang. Nor there had not been that One, if ſhe had had to do with any Thing but Aſtrologers, Uncle! That makes my Aunt go abroad.

Foreſ. How? how! is that the Reaſon? Come, you know ſomething; tell me, and I'll forgive you; do, good Niece.—Come, you ſhall have my Coach and Horſes—faith and troth, you ſhall.—Does my Wife complain? Come, I know Women tell one another.—She is young and ſanguine, has a wanton Hazel Eye, and was born under *Gemini*, which may incline her to Society; ſhe has a Mole upon her Lip, with a moiſt Palm, and an open Liberality on the Mount of *Venus*.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

Foreſ.

Foreſ. Do you laugh?—Well, Gentlewoman, I'll—But come, be a good Girl, don't perplex your poor Uncle! Tell me—won't you ſpeak? Odd, I'll—

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] SERVANT.

Serv. Sir *Sampſon* is coming down, to wait upon you, Sir.

Ang. Good b'ye, Uncle.—Call me a Chair.—I'll find out my Aunt, and tell her, ſhe muſt not come home.

Foreſ. I am ſo perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I ſhall ſcarce recover myſelf before the Hour be paſt. Go, Nurſe; tell Sir *Sampſon*, I'm ready to wait on him.

Nurſe. Yes, Sir,

Foreſ. Well—why, if I was born to be a Cuckold, there's no more to be ſaid!—He is here already.

SCENE V.

FORESIGHT, *and Sir* SAMPSON LEGEND *with a Paper.*

Sir *Sampſon Legend.* Nor no more to be done, old Boy; that is plain—here it is, I have it in my Hand, old *Ptolemy*; I'll make the ungracious Prodigal know who begat him; I will, old *Noſtrodamus*. What, I warrant, my Son thought nothing belonged to a Father, but Forgiveneſs and Affection; no Authority, no Correction, no arbitrary Power—nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon! I warrant you, if he danced till Doomſday, he thought I was to pay the Piper. Well, but here it is under Black and White, *ſignatum*, *ſigillatum*, and *deliberatum*—that, as ſoon as my Son *Benjamin* is arrived, he is to make over to him his Right of Inheritance. Where's my Daughter that is to be—ha! old *Merlin*? Body of me,

me, I'm ſo glad I'm revenged on this undutiful Rogue!

Foreſ. Odſo, let me ſee; let me ſee the Paper.—Ay, faith and troth, here it is, if it will but hold—I wiſh Things were done, and the Conveyance made.—When was this ſigned? what Hour? Odſo, you ſhould have conſulted me for the Time. Well, but we'll make haſte.

Sir *Samſ.* Haſte; ay, ay, Haſte enough; my Son *Ben* will be in Town To-night—I have ordered my Lawyer to draw up Writings of Settlement and Jointure—all ſhall be done To-night.—No Matter for the Time; pr'ythee, Brother *Foreſight*, leave Superſtition.—Pox o'th' Time; there's no Time but the Time preſent; there's no more to be ſaid of what's paſt; and all that is to come will happen. If the Sun ſhine by Day, and the Stars by Night—why, we ſhall know one another's Faces without the Help of a Candle; and that's all the Stars are good for.

Foreſ. How, how, Sir *Sampſon*? that all? Give me leave to contradict you, and tell you, you are ignorant.

Sir *Samſ.* I tell you, I am wiſe: and *Sapiens dominabitur Aſtris*; there's *Latin* for you to prove it, and an Argument to confound your *Ephemeris*.—Ignorant!—I tell you, I have traveled, old *Feroa*, and know the Globe. I have ſeen the *Antipodes*, where the Sun riſes at Midnight, and ſets at Noon-day.

Foreſ. But I tell you, I have traveled, and traveled in the Celeſtial *Spheres*; know the *Signs* and the *Planets*, and their Houſes; can judge of Motions Direct and Retrograde, of *Sextils*, *Quadrates*, *Trines* and *Oppoſitions*, Fiery *Trigons*, and Aquatical *Trigons*; know whether Life ſhall be long or ſhort, happy or unhappy; whether Diſeaſes are curable or incurable; if Journeys ſhall be proſperous, Undertakings ſucceſsful; or Goods ſtolen recovered; I know—

Sir

Sir *Samps.* I know the Length of the Emperor of *China's* Foot; have kiſſed the *Great Mogul's* Slipper, and rid a hunting upon an Elephant with the Cham of *Tartary*.—Body o'me, I have made a Cuckold of a King; and the preſent Majeſty of *Bantam* is the Iſſue of theſe Loins.

Foreſ. I know when Travelers lie or ſpeak Truth, when they don't know it themſelves.

Sir *Samps.* I have known an Aſtrologer made a Cuckold in the Twinkling of a Star; and ſeen a Conjuror, that could not keep the Devil out of his Wife's Circle.

Foreſ. What, does he twit me with my Wife too? I muſt be better informed of this. [*Aſide.*]—Do you mean my Wife, Sir *Sampſon?* Though you made a Cuckold of the King of *Bantam*, yet by the Body of the Sun—

Sir *Samps.* By the Horns of the Moon, you would ſay, Brother *Capricorn*.

Foreſ. *Capricorn* in your Teeth, thou modern *Mandevilles*, *Ferdinand Mendez Pinto* was but a Type of thee, thou Liar of the firſt Magnitude. Take back your Paper of Inheritance; ſend your Son to Sea again. I'll wed my Daughter to an *Egyptian* Mummy, ere ſhe ſhall incorporate with a Contemner of Sciences, and a Defamer of Virtue.

Sir *Samps.* Body o'me, I have gone too far—I muſt not provoke honeſt *Abumazar*.—An *Egyptian* Mummy is an illuſtrious Creature, my truſty Hieroglyphick; and may have Significations of Futurity about him. Odſbud, I would my Son were an *Egyptian* Mummy for thy Sake. What, thou art not angry for a Jeſt, my good *Holy?*—I reverence the Sun, Moon, and Stars, with all my Heart.—What, I'll make thee a Preſent of a Mummy. Now I think on't, Body o'me, I have a Shoulder of an *Egyptian* King, that I purloined from one of the Pyramids, powdered with Hieroglyphicks; thou ſhalt have it brought home

home to thy Houſe; and make an Entertainment for all the *Philomoths*, and Students in Phyſick and Aſtrology, in and about *London*.

Forcſ. But what do you know of my Wife, Sir *Sampſon?*

Sir *Sampſ.* Thy Wife is a Conſtellation of Virtues; ſhe is the Moon, and thou art the Man in the Moon: nay, ſhe is more illuſtrious than the Moon; for ſhe has her Chaſtity, without her Inconſtancy: 'sbud, I was but in Jeſt.

SCENE VI.

[*To them*] JEREMY.

Sir *Sampſ.* How now? who ſent for you, ha? what would you have?

Forcſ. Nay, if you were but in Jeſt!—Who's that Fellow? I don't like his Phyſiognomy.

Sir *Sampſ.* [*to Jeremy.*] My Son, Sir? what Son Sir? my Son *Benjamine*, ha?

Jer. No, Sir Mr. *Valentine*, my Maſter;—it is the firſt Time he has been abroad ſince his Confinement, and he comes to pay his Duty to you.

Sir *Sampſ.* Well, Sir.

SCENE VII.

FORESIGHT, *Sir* SAMPSON, VALENTINE, JEREMY.

Jer. He is here, Sir.

Valent. Your Bleſſing, Sir!

Sir *Sampſ.* You've had it already, Sir; I think I ſent it you To-day in a Bill of Four Thouſand Pounds.—A great deal of Money, Brother *Forcſight!*

Forcſ. Ay, indeed, Sir *Sampſon*, a great deal of Money for a young Man; I wonder what he can do with it!

Sir

Sir *Sampſ.* Body o'me, ſo do I.—Hark ye, *Valentine*, if there be too much, refund the Superfluity; doſt hear, Boy?

Valent. Superfluity, Sir! it will ſcarce pay my Debts.—I hope you will have more Indulgence, than to oblige me to thoſe hard Conditions which my Neceſſity ſigned to.

Sir *Sampſ.* Sir! how? I beſeech you, what were you pleaſed to intimate, concerning Indulgence?

Valent. Why, Sir, that you would not go to the Extremity of the Conditions, but releaſe me at leaſt from ſome Part.

Sir *Sampſ.* O, Sir, I underſtand you—that's all, ha?

Valent. Yes, Sir, all that I preſume to aſk.—But what you, out of Fatherly Fondneſs, will be pleaſed to add, ſhall be doubly welcome.

Sir *Sampſ.* No Doubt of it, ſweet Sir, but your filial Piety and my fatherly Fondneſs would fit like two Tallies.—Here's a Rogue, Brother *Foreſight*, makes a Bargain under Hand and Seal in the Morning, and would be releaſed from it in the Afternoon; here's a Rogue Dog; here's Conſcience and Honeſty! This is your Wit now, this is the Morality of your Wits! You are a Wit, and have been a Beau, and may be a——Why Sirrah, is it not here under Hand and Seal?—Can you deny it?

Valent. Sir, I don't deny it.

Sir *Sampſ.* Sirrah, you'll be hanged; I ſhall live to ſee you go up *Holbourn-Hill.*—Has he not a Rogue's Face?—Speak, Brother; you underſtand Phyſiognomy, a hanging Look, to me—of all my Boys the moſt unlike me; he has a damn'd *Tyburn* Face, without the Benefit of the Clergy.

Foreſ. Hum!—truly, I don't care to diſcourage a young Man—he has a violent Death in his Face; but I hope no Danger of hanging.

Valeur.

Valent. Sir, is this Uſage for your Son?—For that old Weather-headed Fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, Sir—

Sir *Sampſ.* You, Sir; and you, Sir.—Why, who are you, Sir?

Valent. Your Son, Sir.

Sir *Sampſ.* That's more than I know, Sir; and I believe not.

Valent. Faith, I hope not.

Sir *Sampſ.* What, would you have your Mother a Whore? did you ever hear the like? did you ever hear the like? Body o'me—

Valent. I would have an Excuſe for your Barbarity and unnatural Uſage.

Sir *Sampſ.* Excuſe?—Impudence! Why, Sirrah, mayn't I do what I pleaſe? are not you my Slave? did not I beget you? and might not I have choſen whether I would have begot you or no? Ooons, who are you! whence came you? what brought you into the World? how came you here, Sir? here, to ſtand here, upon thoſe two Legs, and look erect with that audacious Face, hah? Anſwer me that. Did you come a Volunteer into the World? or did I, with the lawful Authority of a Parent, preſs you to the Service?

Valent. I know no more why I came, than you do why you called me. But here I am; and if you don't mean to provide for me, I deſire you would leave me as you found me.

Sir *Sampſ.* With all my Heart. Come, uncaſe, ſtrip, and go naked out of the World as you came into it.

Valent. My Cloaths are ſoon put off—but you muſt alſo diveſt me of my Reaſon, Thought, Paſſions, Inclinations, Affections, Appetites, Senſes, and the huge Train of Attendants that you begot along with me.

Sir *Sampſ.* Body o'me, what a many-headed Monſter have I propagated!

Valent.

Valen. I am, of myſelf, a plain, eaſy, ſimple Creature; and to be kept at ſmall Expence: but the Retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible; they are ſo many Devils that you have raiſed, and will have Employment.

Sir *Samp.* Oons, what had I to do to get Children?—can't a private Man be born without all theſe Followers?—Why nothing under an Emperor ſhould be born with Appetites.—Why, at this Rate, a Fellow that has but a Groat in his Pocket may have a Stomach capable of a Ten Shilling Ordinary.

Jeremy. Nay that's as clear as the Sun; I'll make Oath of it before any Juſtice in *Middleſex*.

Sir *Sampſon.* Here's a Cormorant too!—'S'heart this Fellow was not born with you?—I did not beget him, did I?

Jeremy. By the Proviſion that's made for me, you might have begot me too.—Nay, and to tell your Worſhip another Truth, I believe you did; for I find I was born with thoſe ſame whoreſon Appetites too that my Maſter ſpeaks of.

Sir *Samp.* Why look you there now!—I'll maintain it, that, by the Rule of right Reaſon, this Fellow ought to have been born without a Palate.—'S'heart, what ſhould he do with a diſtinguiſhing Taſte?—I warrant now, he'd rather eat a Pheaſant, than a Piece of poor *John*—and ſmell, now; why, I warrant, he can ſmell, and loves Perfumes above a Stink.—Why there's it; and Muſick—don't you love Muſick, Scoundrel?

Jeremy. Yes, I have a reaſonable good Ear, Sir, as to Jiggs and Country Dances, and the like; I don't much matter your *Solo's* or *Sonata's*; they give me the Spleen.

Sir *Samp.* The Spleen? ha, ha, ha! A Pox confound you!—*Solo's* or *Sonata's*? Oons, whoſe Son are you? How were you engendered, Muckworm?

Jeremy.

Jeremy. I am, by my Father, the Son of a Chairman; my Mother ſold Oyſters in Winter, and Cucumbers in Summer: and I came up Stairs into the World; for I was born in a Cellar.

Foreſ. By your Looks, you ſhould go up Stairs out of the World too, Friend.

Sir *Sampſ.* And if this Rogue were anatomized now, and diſſected, he has his Veſſels of Digeſtion and Concoction, and ſo forth, large enough for the Inſide of a Cardinal; this Son of a Cucumber!—Theſe Things are unaccountable and unreaſonable.—Body o'me, why was not I a Bear, that my Cubs might have lived upon ſucking their Paws? Nature has been provident only to Bears and Spiders: the one has its Nutriment in his own Hands; and the other ſpins his Habitation out of his own Entrails.

Valent. Fortune was provident enough to ſupply all the Neceſſities of my Nature, if I had my Right of Inheritance.

Sir *Sampſ.* Again! Oons, han't you Four Thouſand Pounds?—If I had it again, I would not give thee a Groat.—What, wouldſt thou have me turn Pelican, and feed thee out of my own Vitals?—Odſheart, live by your Wits—you were always fond of the Wits.—Now let's ſee if you have Wit enough to keep yourſelf.—Your Brother will be in Town To-night, or To-morrow Morning; and then look you perform Covenants: and ſo your Friend and Servant.—Come, Brother *Foreſight.*

SCENE VIII.

VALENTINE, JEREMY.

Jeremy. I told you what your Viſit would come to.

Valent. 'Tis as much as I expected—I did not come to ſee him: I came to *Angelica*; but, ſince ſhe was gone abroad, it was eaſily turned another Way, and at leaſt looked well on my Side. What's here? Mrs.

Foreſight

Foresight and Mrs. *Frail!* They are earneſt—avoid them.—Come this Way, and go and inqu when *Angelica* will return.

SCENE IX.

Mrs. FORESIGHT *and Mrs.* FRAIL.

Mrs. *Frail.* What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife, I'll do what I pleaſe.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* You will?

Mrs. *Frail.* Yes, marry, will I.—A great Piece of Buſineſs, to go to *Covent-Garden Square* in a Hackney-coach, and take a Turn with one's Friend!

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Nay, two or three Turns, I'll take my Oath.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, what if I took Twenty!—I warrant, if you had been there, it had been ony innocent Recreation!—Lord, where's the Comfort of this Life, if we can't have the Happineſs of converſing where we like?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* But can't you converſe at home?—I own it, I think there's no Happineſs like converſing with an agreeable Man; I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your Converſation was very innocent. But the Place is public; and to be ſeen with a Man in a Hackney-coach is ſcandalous. What if any body elſe ſhould have ſeen you alight, as I did?—How can any body be happy, while they are in perpetual Fear of being ſeen and cenſured?—Beſides, it would not only reflect upon you, Siſter, but me!

Mrs. *Frail.* Pooh, here's a Clutter!—Why ſhould it reflect upon you?—I don't doubt but you have thought yourſelf happy in a Hackney-coach before now!—If I had gone to *Knights-Bridge*, or to *Chelſea*, or to *Spring-Garden*, or *Barn-Elms*, with a Man alone—ſomething might have been ſaid.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Why, was I ever in any of thoſe Places? What do you mean, Siſter?

Mrs.

Mrs. *Frail.* Was I? What do you mean?

Mrs. *Foref.* You have been at a worſe Place.

Mrs. *Frail.* I at a worſe Place, and with a Man?

Mrs. *Foref.* I ſuppoſe you would not go alone to the *World's-End.*

Mrs. *Frail.* The *World's End!* What, do you mean to banter me?

Mrs. *Foref.* Poor Innocent! you don't know that there is a Place called the *World's-End?* I'll ſwear, you can keep your Countenance purely; you'd make an admirable Player!

Mrs. *Frail.* I'll ſwear, you have a great deal of Confidence, and in my Mind too much for the Stage.

Mrs. *Foref.* Very well, that will appear who has moſt; you never were at the *World's-End?*

Mrs. *Frail.* No.

Mrs. *Foref.* You deny it poſitively to my Face?

Mrs. *Frail.* Your Face! what's your Face?

Mrs. *Foref.* No Matter for that, it's as good a Face as yours.

Mrs. *Frail.* Not by a Dozen Years Wearing.—But I do deny it poſitively to your Face then.

Mrs. *Foref.* I'll allow you now to find Fault with my Face; for, I'll ſwear, your Impudence has put me out of Countenance.—But look you here now,—where did you loſe this Gold Bodkin? Oh, Siſter, Siſter!

Mrs. *Frail.* My Bodkin!

Mrs. *Foref.* Nay, 'tis yours; look at it.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, if you go to that, where did you find this Bodkin?—Oh, Siſter, Siſter!—Siſter every Way!

Mrs. *Foref.* O, Devil on't! that I could not diſcover her, without betraying myſelf! [*Aſide.*

Mrs. *Frail.* I have heard Gentlemen ſay, Siſter, that one ſhould take great Care, when one makes a Thruſt in Fencing, not to lay open one's ſelf.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* It is very true, Siſter. Well, ſince all's out, and, as you ſay, ſince we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in Duels, take Care of one another, and grow better Friends than before.

Mrs. *Frail.* With all my Heart. Ours are but ſlight fleſh Wounds; and, if we keep them from Air, not at all dangerous. Well, give me your Hand, in Token of ſiſterly Secrecy and Affection.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Here it is, with all my Heart.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, as an Earneſt of Friendſhip and Confidence, I'll acquaint you with a Deſign that I have. To tell Truth, and ſpeak openly one to another, I'm afraid the World have obſerved us more than we have obſerved one another. You have a rich Huſband, and are provided for: I am at a Loſs, and have no great Stock either of Fortune or Reputation, and therefore muſt look ſharply about me. Sir *Samſon* has a Son, that is expected To-night; and, by the Account I have heard of his Education, can be no Conjurer. The Eſtate, you know, is to be made over to him.—Now, if I could wheedle him, Siſter, ha? you underſtand me?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* I do; and will help you, to the utmoſt of my Power.—And I can tell you one Thing that falls out luckily enough; my aukward Daughter-in-Law, who, you know, is deſigned to be his Wife, is grown fond of Mr. *Tattle*; now, if we can improve that, and make her have an Averſion for the Booby, it may go a great Way towards his liking you. Here they come together; and let us contrive ſome Way or other to leave them together.

SCENE X.

[*To them*] TATTLE *and Miſs* PRUE.

Miſs *Prue.* Mother, Mother, Mother, look you here,

Mrs.

Mrs. *Foref.* Fie, fie, Miſs, how you bawl!—Beſides, I have told you, you muſt not call me Mother.

Miſs *Prue.* What muſt I call you then? are you not my Father's Wife?

Mrs. *Foref.* Madam; you muſt ſay Madam.—By my Soul, I ſhall fancy myſelf old indeed, to have this great Girl call me Mother.—Well but, Miſs, what are you ſo over-joyed at?

Miſs *Prue.* Look you here, Madam, then, what Mr. *Tattle* has given me.—Look you here, Couſin; here's a Snuff-Box; nay, there's Snuff in't—here, will you have any?—oh good! how ſweet it is!—Mr. *Tattle* is all over ſweet; his Peruke is ſweet, and his Gloves are ſweet—and his Handkerchief is ſweet, pure ſweet, ſweeter than Roſes.—Smell him, Mother—Madam, I mean.—He gave me this Ring, for a Kiſs.

Tatt. O fie, Miſs, you muſt not kiſs, and tell.

Miſs *Prue.* Yes; I may tell my Mother—and he ſays he'll give me ſomething to make me ſmell ſo.—Oh, pray lend me your Handkerchief.—Smell, Couſin; he ſays, he'll give me ſomething that will make my Smocks ſmell this Way.—Is not it pure?—It's better than Lavender, mun.—I'm reſolved I won't let Nurſe put any more Lavender among my Smocks—ha, Couſin?

Mrs. *Frail.* Fie, Miſs; amongſt your Linen, you muſt ſay—you muſt never ſay Smock.

Miſs *Prue.* Why, it is not Bawdy, is it, Couſin?

Tatt. Oh, Madam! you are too ſevere upon Miſs: you muſt not find Fault with her pretty Simplicity; it becomes her ſtrangely.—Pretty Miſs, don't let them perſuade you out of your Innocency!

Mrs. *Foref.* Oh, demm you, Toad!—I wiſh you don't perſuade her out of her Innocency.

Tatt. Who I, Madam?—O Lord, how can your Ladyſhip have ſuch a Thought?—ſure you don't know me!

Mrs.

Mrs. *Frail.* Ah, Devil, ſly Devil!—He's as cloſe, Siſter, as a Confeſſor.—He thinks we don't obſerve him.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* A cunning Cur! how ſoon he could find out a freſh harmleſs Creature—and left us, Siſter, preſently.

Tatt. Upon Reputation—

Mrs. *Foreſ.* They're all ſo, Siſter, theſe Men—they love to have the ſpoiling of a young Thing; they are as fond of it, as of being firſt in the Faſhion, or of ſeeing a new Play the firſt Day.—I warrant, it would break Mr. *Tattle's* Heart, to think that any body elſe ſhould be before-hand with him!

Tatt. Oh Lord, I ſwear I would not for the World—

Mrs. *Frail.* O, hang you; who'll believe you?—You'd be hang'd before you'd confeſs—we know you—ſhe's very pretty!—Lord, what pure Red and White!—ſhe looks ſo wholeſome;—ne'er ſtir, I don't know, but I fancy if I were a Man—

Miſs *Prue.* How you love to jeer one, Couſin!

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Hark'ee, Siſter—by my Soul, the Girl is ſpoiled already—d'ye think ſhe'll ever endure a great lubberly Tarpawlin?—Gad, I warrant you ſhe won't let him come near her, after Mr. *Tattle.*

Mrs. *Frail.* On my Soul, I'm afraid not—ah! filthy Creature, that ſmells all of Pitch and Tar!—Devil take you, you confounded Toad—why did you ſee her, before ſhe was married?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Nay, why did we let him?—My Huſband will hang us—he'll think we brought them acquainted.

Mrs. *Frail.* Come, faith, let us be gone—If my Brother *Foreſight* ſhould find us with them, he'd think ſo, ſure enough.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* So he would—but then leaving them together is as bad—and he's ſuch a ſly Devil, he'll never miſs an Opportunity.

Mrs. *Frail.* I don't care; I won't be ſeen in it.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Well, if you ſhould, Mr. *Tattle*, you'll have a World to anſwer for: remember, I waſh my Hands of it; I'm thoroughly innocent.

SCENE XI.

TATTLE, *Miſs* PRUE.

Miſs *Prue.* What makes them go away, Mr. *Tattle?* What do they mean, do you know?

Tatt. Yes, my Dear—I think I can gueſs—but hang me if I know the Reaſon of it.

Miſs *Prue.* Come, muſt not we go too?

Tatt. No, no; they don't mean that.

Miſs *Prue.* No! what then? what ſhall you and I do together?

Tatt. I muſt make Love to you, pretty Miſs; will you let me make Love to you?

Miſs *Prue.* Yes, if you pleaſe.

Tatt. Frank, egad, at leaſt. What a Pox does Mrs. *Foreſight* mean by this Civility? is it to make a Fool of me? or does ſhe leave us together out of good Morality, and do as ſhe would be done by?—Egad, I'll underſtand it ſo. [*Aſide.*

Miſs *Prue.* Well; and how will you make Love to me?—Come, I long to have you begin.—Muſt I make Love too? You muſt tell me how.

Tatt. You muſt let me ſpeak, Miſs; you muſt not ſpeak firſt. I muſt aſk you Queſtions, and you muſt anſwer.

Miſs *Prue.* What, is it like the Catechiſm?—Come then, aſk me.

Tatt. D'ye think you can love me?

Miſs *Prue.* Yes.

Tatt. Pooh, Pox, you muſt not ſay Yes already. I ſhan't care a Farthing for you then, in a Twinkling.

Miſs *Prue.* What muſt I ſay then?

Tatt.

Tatt. Why, you muſt ſay No; or, You believe not; or, You can't tell.

Miſs *Prue.* Why, muſt I tell a Lie then?

Tatt. Yes, if you'd be well-bred. All well-bred Perſons lie.—Beſides, you are a Woman; you muſt never ſpeak what you think: your Words muſt contradict your Thoughts; but your Actions may contradict your Words. So, when I aſk you, if you can love me, you muſt ſay No; but you muſt love me too.—If I tell you you are handſome, you muſt deny it, and ſay, I flatter you—But you muſt think yourſelf more charming than I ſpeak you—and like me for the Beauty which I ſay you have, as much as if I had it myſelf.—If I aſk you to kiſs me, you muſt be angry; but you muſt not refuſe me. If I aſk you for more, you muſt be more angry—but more complying; and as ſoon as ever I make you ſay you'll cry out, you muſt be ſure to hold your Tongue.

Miſs *Prue.* O Lord, I ſwear, this is pure!—I like it better than our old-faſhioned Country Way of ſpeaking one's Mind.—And muſt not you lie too?

Tatt. Hum!—Yes—but you muſt believe I ſpeak Truth.

Miſs *Prue.* O *Gemini!* Well, I always had a great Mind to tell Lies—but they frighted me, and ſaid it was a Sin.

Tatt. Well, my pretty Creature; will you make me happy by giving me a Kiſs?

Miſs *Prue.* No, indeed; I'm angry at you!

[*Runs, and kiſſes him.*

Tatt. Hold, hold, that's pretty well—but you ſhould not have given it me, but have ſuffered me to have taken it.

Miſs *Prue.* Well, we'll do it again.

Tatt. With all my Heart.—Now then, my little Angel. [*Kiſſes her.*

Miſs *Prue.* Piſh!

Tatt. That's right.—Again, my Charmer! [*Kiſſes again.*

Miſs *Prue.* O fie! nay, now I can't abide you.

Tatt. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in *Covent Garden*.—And won't you ſhew me, pretty Miſs, where your Bed-chamber is?

Miſs *Prue.* No, indeed won't I: but I'll run there, and hide myſelf from you behind the Curtains.

Tatt. I'll follow you.

Miſs *Prue.* Ah, but I will hold the Door with both Hands, and be angry; and you ſhall puſh me down before you come in.

Tatt. No, I'll come in firſt, and puſh you down afterwards.

Miſs *Prue.* Will you? Then I'll be more angry, and more complying.

Tatt. Then I'll make you cry out.

Miſs *Prue.* Oh but you ſhan't, for I'll hold my Tongue.

Tatt. Oh, my dear apt Scholar!

Miſs *Prue.* Well, now I'll run, and make more Haſte than you.

Tatt. You ſhall not fly ſo faſt, as I'll purſue.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

NURSE *alone.*

MISS, Miſs, Miſs *Prue!*—Mercy on me, marry, and Amen!—Why, what's become of the Child?—Why, Miſs, Miſs *Foresight!*—Sure ſhe has lockt herſelf up in her Chamber, and gone to Sleep, or to Prayers!—Miſs, Miſs!—I hear her.—Come to your Father, Child. Open the Door.—Open the Door, Miſs.—I hear you cry *Huſht.*—O Lord, who's there? [*peeps.*]—What's here to do?—O the Father! a Man with her!—Why, Miſs, I ſay; God's my Life, here's fine Doings towards!—O Lord, we're all undone!—O you young Harlotry! [*knocks.*]—Ods my Life! won't you open the Door? I'll come in the back Way.

SCENE II.

TATTLE, *Miſs* PRUE.

Miſs *Prue.* O Lord, ſhe's coming—and ſhe'll tell my Father. What ſhall I do now?

Tatt. Pox take her! If ſhe had ſtaid two Minutes longer, I ſhould have wiſhed for her coming.

Miſs *Prue.* O dear, what ſhall I ſay? Tell me, Mr. *Tattle*; tell me a Lie.

Tatt. There's no Occaſion for a Lie; I could never tell a Lie to no Purpoſe.—But, ſince we have done nothing, we muſt ſay nothing, I think. I hear her—I'll leave you together, and come off as you can.

[*Thruſts her in, and ſhuts the Door.*

SCENE III.

TATTLE, VALENTINE, SCANDAL, ANGELICA.

Angel. You can't accuſe me of Inconſtancy; I never told you that I loved you.

Valent. But I can accuſe you of Uncertainty, for not telling me whether you did or not.

Angel. You miſtake Indifference for Uncertainty; I never had Concern enough to aſk myſelf the Queſtion.

Scand. Nor Good-nature enough to anſwer him that did aſk you: I'll ſay that for you, Madam.

Angel. What, are you ſetting up for Good-nature?

Scand. Only for the Affectation of it, as the Women do for Ill-nature.

Angel. Perſuade your Friend that it is all Affectation.

Scand. I ſhall receive no Benefit from the Opinion: for I know no effectual Difference between continued Affectation and Reality.

Tatt. [*coming up*] *Scandal*, are you in private Diſcourſe? any thing of Secreſy? [*Aſide to* Scandal.

Scand. Yes, but I dare truſt you. We were talking of *Angelica's* Love to *Valentine*; you won't ſpeak of it.

Tatt. No, no, not a Syllable—I know that's a Secret, for it is whiſpered every where.

Scand. Ha, ha, ha!

Angel. What is, Mr. *Tattle?* I heard you ſay ſomething was whiſpered every where.

Scand. Your Love of *Valentine*.

Angel. How!

Tatt. No, Madam; his Love for your Ladyſhip—Gad take me, I beg your Pardon—for I never heard a Word of your Ladyſhip's Paſſion, till this Inſtant.

Angel. My Paſſion!—And who told you of my Paſſion, pray, Sir?

Scand.

Scand. Why, is the Devil in you? did not I tell it you for a Secret?

Tatt. Gadſo; but I thought ſhe might have been truſted with her own Affairs.

Scand. Is that your Diſcretion? truſt a Woman with herſelf?

Tatt. You ſay true; I beg your Pardon—I'll bring all off.—It was impoſſible, Madam, for me to imagine, that a Perſon of your Ladyſhip's Wit and Gallantry could have ſo long received the paſſionate Addreſſes of the accompliſhed *Valentine*, and yet remain inſenſible: therefore you will pardon me, if, from a juſt Weight of his Merit, with your Ladyſhip's good Judgement, I formed the Balance of a reciprocal Affection.

Val. O the Devil! what damn'd coſtive Poet has given thee this Leſſon of Fuſtian to get by Rote?

Ang. I dare ſwear, you wrong him; it is his own—and Mr. *Tattle* only judges of the Succeſs of others, from the Effects of his own Merit; for, certainly, Mr. *Tattle* was never denied any thing in his Life.

Tatt. O Lord! yes indeed, Madam, ſeveral Times.

Ang. I ſwear, I don't think it is poſſible.

Tatt. Yes, I vow and ſwear, I have. Lord, Madam, I'm the moſt unfortunate Man in the World, and the moſt cruelly uſed by the Ladies.

Ang. Nay, now you're ungrateful.

Tatt. No, I hope not.—It is as much Ingratitude to own ſome Favours, as to conceal others.

Val. There, now it is out.

Ang. I don't underſtand you now. I thought you had never aſked any thing, but what a Lady might modeſtly grant, and you confeſs.

Scand. So, faith, your Buſineſs is done here; now you may go brag ſomewhere elſe.

Tatt. Brag! O Heavens! Why, did I name any body?

Ang. No; I ſuppoſe that is not in your Power, but you would if you could, no Doubt on't.

Tatt. Not in my Power, Madam?—What! does your Ladyſhip mean, that I have no Woman's Reputation in my Power?

Scand. Oons, why you won't own it, will you? [*Aſide.*

Tatt. Faith, Madam, you are in the right; no more I have, as I hope to be ſaved; I never had it in my Power to ſay any Thing to a Lady's Prejudice in my Life.—For, as I was telling you, Madam, I have been the moſt unſucceſsful Creature living in Things of that Nature; and never had the good Fortune to be truſted once with a Lady's Secret; not once.

Ang. No?

Val. Not once, I dare anſwer for him.

Scand. And I'll anſwer for him; for, I'm ſure if he had, he would have told me. I find, Madam, you don't know Mr. *Tattle*.

Tatt. No indeed, Madam, you don't know me at all, I find; for ſure, my intimate Friends would have known—

Ang. Then it ſeems you would have told, if you had been truſted.

Tatt. O Pox, *Scandal*, that was too far put!—Never have told Particulars, Madam. Perhaps I might have talked as of a third Perſon—or have introduced an Amour of my own, in Converſation, by Way of Novel: but never have explained Particulars.

Ang. But whence comes the Reputation of Mr. *Tattle*'s Secrecy, if he was never truſted?

Scand. Why thence it ariſes.—The Thing is proverbially ſpoken; but may be applied to him.—As if we ſhould ſay in general Terms, He only is ſecret, who never was truſted; a ſatirical Proverb upon our Sex.—There is another upon yours—as, She is chaſte, who was never aſked the Queſtion. That's all.

Val.

Val. A couple of very civil Proverbs, truly. It is hard to tell whether the Lady or Mr. *Tattle* be the more obliged, to you. For you found her Virtue upon the Backwardneſs of the Men; and his Secrecy upon the Miſtruſt of the Women.

Tatt. Gad, it's very true, Madam; I think we are obliged to acquit ourſelves.—And for my Part—but your Ladyſhip is to ſpeak firſt.

Ang. Am I? Well, I freely confeſs, I have reſiſted a great deal of Temptation.

Tatt. And, egad, I have given ſome Temptation that has not been reſiſted.

Val. Good.

Ang. I cite *Valentine* here, to declare to the Court, how fruitleſs he has found his Endeavours, and to confeſs all his Solicitations and my Denials.

Val. I am ready to plead, Not Guilty, for you; and Guilty, for myſelf.

Scand. So, why this is fair! here's Demonſtration, with a Witneſs.

Tatt. Well, my Witneſſes are not preſent.—Yet, I confeſs, I have had Favours from Perſons; but, as the Favours are numberleſs, ſo the Perſons are nameleſs.

Scand. Pooh, this proves nothing.

Tatt. No? I can ſhew Letters, Lockets, Pictures, and Rings; and, if there be Occaſion for Witneſſes, I can ſummon the Maids at the Chocolate-houſes, all the Porters at *Pall-Mall* and *Covent-Garden*, the Door-keepers at the Play-houſe, the Drawers at *Locket's*, *Pontack*, *The Rummer*, *Spring-garden*, my own Landlady and *Valet de Chambre*; all who ſhall make Oath, that I receive more Letters than the Secretary's Office; and that I have more Vizor-maſks to enquire for me, than ever went to ſee the Hermaphrodite, or the naked Prince. And it is notorious, that, in a Country Church, once, an Inquiry being made who I was, it was anſwered, "I was

"the famous *Tattle*, who had ruined ſo many Wo-"men."

Val. It was there, I ſuppoſe, you got the Nick-name of the *Great Turk*.

Tatt. True; I was called *Turk Tattle* all over the Pariſh.—The next *Sunday*, all the old Women kept their Daughters at home, and the Parſon had not half his Congregation. He would have brought me into the Spiritual Court: but I was revenged upon him, for he had a handſome Daughter whom I initiated into the Science. But I repented it afterwards; for it was talked of in Town.—And a Lady of Quality, that ſhall be nameleſs, in a raging Fit of Jealouſy, came down in her Coach and ſix Horſes, and expoſed herſelf upon my account; gad, I was ſorry for it with all my Heart.—You know whom I mean—you know where we raffled—

Scand. Mum, *Tattle!*

Val. 'Sdeath, are not you aſhamed?

Angel. O barbarous! I never heard ſo inſolent a Piece of Vanity!—Fie, Mr. *Tattle!*—I'll ſwear I could not have believed it.—Is this your Secrecy!

Tatt. Gad ſo, the Heat of my Story carried me beyond my Diſcretion, as the Heat of the Lady's Paſſion hurried her beyond her Reputation—But I hope you don't know whom I mean; for there were a great many Ladies raffled.—Pox on't, now could I bite off my Tongue.

Scand. No, don't; for then you'll tell us no more. Come, I'll recommend a Song to you, upon the Hint of my two Proverbs; and I ſee one in the next Room that will ſing it. [*Goes to the Door.*

Tatt. For Heaven's ſake, if you do gueſs, ſay nothing. Gad, I'm very unfortunate!

Scand. Pray ſing the firſt Song in the laſt new Play.

SONG.

SONG.

I.

A Nymph and a Swain to Apollo *once pray'd,*
The Swain had been jilted, the Nymph been betray'd:
Their Intent was, to try if his Oracle knew
E'er a Nymph that was chaſte, or a Swain that was true.

II.

Apollo *was mute, and had like t'have been pos'd,*
But ſagely at length he this Secret diſclos'd:
He alone won't betray, in whom none will confide;
And the Nymph may be chaſte, that has never been try'd.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] *Sir* SAMPSON, *Mrs.* FRAIL, *Miſs* PRUE, *and Servant.*

Sir *Samp.* Is *Ben* come? Odſo, my Son *Ben* come? Odd, I'm glad on't.—Where is he? I long to ſee him. Now, Mrs. *Frail*, you ſhall ſee my Son *Ben*.—Body o'me, he's the Hopes of my Family—I han't ſeen him theſe three Years—I warrant, he's grown!—Call him in; bid him make haſte.—I'm ready to cry for Joy.

Mrs. *Frail.* Now, Miſs, you ſhall ſee your Huſband.

Miſs *Prue.* Piſh, he ſhall be none of my Huſband. [*Aſide to* Frail.

Mrs. *Frail.* Huſh! Well, he ſhan't; leave that to me—I'll beckon Mr. *Tattle* to us.

Angel. Won't you ſtay and ſee your Brother?

Val. We are the Twin Stars, and cannot ſhine in one Sphere; when he riſes, I muſt ſet.—Beſides, if I ſhould ſtay, I don't know but my Father in Good-nature may preſs me to the immediate ſigning the

Deed of Conveyance of my Eſtate; and I'll defer it as long as I can.—Well, you'll come to a Reſolution.

Angel. I cannot. Reſolution muſt come to me, or I ſhall never have one.

Scand. Come, *Valentine*, I'll go with you; I have ſomething in my Head, to communicate to you.

SCENE V.

ANGELICA, *Sir* SAMPSON, TATTLE, *Mrs.* FRAIL, *Miſs* PRUE.

Sir *Samp.* What! is my Son *Valentine* gone? What! is he ſneaked off, and would not ſee his Brother? There's an unnatural Whelp! there's an ill-natured Dog! What! were you here too, Madam, and could not keep him? could neither Love, nor Duty, nor natural Affection, oblige him? Odsbud, Madam, have no more to ſay to him; he is not worth your Conſideration. The Rogue has not a Drachm of generous Love about him—all Intereſt, all Intereſt! he's an undone Scoundrel, and courts your Eſtate. Body o'me, he does not care a Doit for your Perſon.

Angel. I am pretty even with him, Sir *Sampſon*; for, if ever I could have liked any Thing in him, it ſhould have been his Eſtate too. But, ſince that's gone, the Bait's off, and the naked Hook appears.

Sir *Samp.* Odſbud, well ſpoken; and you are a wiſer Woman than I thought you were: for moſt young Women nowadays are to be tempted with a naked Hook.

Angel. If I marry, Sir *Sampſon*, I am for a good Eſtate with any Man, and for any Man with a good Eſtate: therefore, if I were obliged to make a Choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your Son.

Sir *Samp.* Faith and Troth, you are a wiſe Woman; and I'm glad to hear you ſay ſo. I was afraid you were in Love with the Reprobate. Odd, I was ſorry for you,

with

with all my Heart. Hang him, Mongrel; caſt him off. You ſhall ſee the Rogue ſhew himſelf, and make Love to ſome deſponding *Cadua* of Fourſcore for Suſtenance. Odd, I love to ſee a young Spendthrift forced to cling to an old Woman for Support, like Ivy round a dead Oak—faith I do. I love to ſee them hug and cotton together, like Down upon a Thiſtle.

SCENE VI.

[*To them*] BEN, LEGEND, *and Servant.*

Ben. Where's Father?

Serv. There, Sir; his Back's towards you.

Sir *Samp.* My Son *Ben!* Bleſs thee, my dear Boy! Body o'me, thou art heartily welcome.

Ben. Thank you, Father; and I'm glad to ſee you.

Sir *Samp.* Odſbud, and I'm glad to ſee thee. Kiſs me, Boy; kiſs me again and again, dear *Ben.*

[*Kiſſes him.*

Ben. So, ſo, enough, Father.—Meſs, I'd rather kiſs theſe Gentlewomen.

Sir *Samp.* And ſo thou ſhalt.—Mrs. *Angelica*, my Son *Ben.*

Ben. Forſooth, if you pleaſe! [*Salutes her.*]—Nay, Miſtreſs, I'm not for dropping Anchor here; about Ship, i'faith. [*Kiſſes* Frail.]—Nay, and you too, my little Cock-boat! ſo. [*Kiſſes Miſs.*

Tatt. Sir, you're welcome aſhore.

Ben. Thank you, thank you, Friend.

Sir *Samp.* Thou haſt been many a weary League, *Ben*, ſince I ſaw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been? been far enough, and that be all. Well, Father, and how do all at home? how does Brother *Dick*, and Brother *Val?*

Sir *Samp.* *Dick!* body o'me, *Dick* has been dead theſe two Years. I writ you Word, when you were at *Leghorn.*

Ben.

Ben. Meſs, that's true: marry, I had forgot. *Dick* is dead, as you ſay.—Well, and how? I have a many Queſtions to aſk you; well, you ben't married again, Father, be you?

Sir *Samp.* No, I intend you ſhall marry, *Ben*; I would not marry, for thy ſake.

Ben. Nay, what does that ſignify?—An you marry again—why then, I'll go to Sea again, ſo there's one for t'other, an that be all.—Pray don't let me be your Hindrance; e'en marry, a God's Name, an the Wind ſit that Way. As for my Part, mayhap I have no Mind to marry.

Mrs. *Frail.* That would be Pity, ſuch a handſome young Gentleman!

Ben. Handſome! he, he, he! Nay, forſooth, an you be for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my Jeſt, an the Ship were ſinking, as we ſaid at Sea. But I'll tell you why I don't much ſtand towards Matrimony. I love to roam about from Port to Port, and from Land to Land: I could never abide to be Port-bound, as we call it. Now a Man that is married has, as it were, d'ye ſee, his Feet in the Bilboes, and mayhap mayn't get them out again when he would.

Sir *Samp.* *Ben* is a Wag.

Ben. A Man that is married, d'ye ſee, is no more like another Man, than a Galley-ſlave is like one of us free-Sailors: he is chained to an Oar all his Life; and mayhap forced to tug a leaky Veſſel into the Bargain.

Sir *Samp.* A very Wag! *Ben* is a very Wag; only a little rough; he wants a little poliſhing.

Mrs. *Frail.* Not at all; I like his Humour mightily: it is plain and honeſt, I ſhould like ſuch a Humour in a Huſband extremely.

Ben. Say'n you ſo, forſooth? Marry, and I ſhould like ſuch a handſome Gentlewoman for a Bed-fellow hugely. How ſay you, Miſtreſs? would you like going to Sea? Meſs, you're a tight Veſſel; and well rigged, an you were but as well manned.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Frail.* I ſhould not doubt that, if you were Maſter of me.

Ben. But I'll tell you one Thing, an you come to Sea in a high Wind, or that Lady—you mayn't carry ſo much Sail o'your Head—Top and Top Gallant, by the Meſs!

Mrs. *Frail.* No? why ſo?

Ben. Why, an you do, you may run the Riſk to be over-ſet: and then you'll carry your Keels above Water—he, he, he!

Angel. I ſwear, Mr. *Benjamin* is the verieſt Wag in Nature; an abſolute Sea Wit.

Sir *Sampſon.* Nay, *Ben* has Parts; but, as I told you before, they want a little poliſhing. You muſt not take any Thing ill, Madam.

Ben. No, I hope the Gentlewoman is not angry; I mean all in good Part: for, if I give a Jeſt, I'll take a Jeſt; and ſo, forſooth, you may be as free with me.

Angel. I thank you, Sir; I am not at all offended. —But methinks, Sir *Sampſon*, you ſhould leave him alone with his Miſtreſs. Mr. *Tattle*, we muſt not hinder Lovers.

Tatt. Well, Miſs, I have your Promiſe.

[*Aſide to Miſs.*

Sir *Samp.* Body o'me, Madam, you ſay true.—Look you, *Ben*, this is your Miſtreſs.—Come, Miſs, you muſt not be ſhame-faced; we'll leave you together.

Miſs *Prue.* I can't abide to be left alone. Mayn't my Couſin ſtay with me?

Sir *Sampſon.* No, no. Come, let's away.

Ben. Look you, Father, mayhap the young Woman mayn't take a Liking to me!

Sir *Samp.* I warrant thee, Boy. Come, come, we'll be gone. I'll venture that.

SCENE

SCENE VII.

BEN, *and Miſs* PRUE.

Ben. Come, Miſtreſs, will you pleaſe to ſit down? For, an you ſtand a ſtern a-that'n, we ſhall never grapple together.—Come, I'll hawl a Chair; there, an you pleaſe to ſit, I'll ſit by you.

Miſs *Prue.* You need not ſit ſo near one; if you have any Thing to ſay, I can hear you farther off; I an't deaf.

Ben. Why that's true, as you ſay, nor I an't dumb; I can be heard as far as another.—I'll heave off, to pleaſe you. [*Sits farther off.*]—An we were a League aſunder, I'd undertake to hold Diſcourſe with you, an 'twere not a main high Wind indeed, and full in my Teeth. Look you, forſooth; I am, as it were, bound for the Land of Matrimony: 'tis a Voyage, d'ye ſee, that was none of my ſeeking; I was commanded by Father, and if you like of it, mayhap I may ſteer into your Harbour. How ſay you, Miſtreſs? The Short of the Thing is, that, if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to ſwing in a Hammock together.

Miſs *Prue.* I don't know what to ſay to you, nor I don't care to ſpeak with you at all.

Ben. No? I'm ſorry for that.—But pray why are you ſo ſcornful?

Miſs *Prue.* As long as one muſt not ſpeak one's Mind, one had better not ſpeak at all, I think; and truely I won't tell a Lie for the Matter.

Ben. Nay, you ſay true in that; it's but a Folly to lie; for to ſpeak one Thing, and to think juſt the contrary Way, is, as it were, to look one Way, and to row another. Now, for my Part, d'ye ſee, I'm for carrying Things above Board; I'm not for keeping any thing under Hatches—ſo that, if you ben't as willing as I, ſay ſo, a God's Name; there's no Harm done.

done. Mayhap you may be ſhame-faced; ſome Maidens, thof they love a Man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n ſo to's Face. If that's the Caſe, why Silence gives Conſent.

Miſs *Prue.* But I'm ſure it is not ſo, for I'll ſpeak ſooner than you ſhould believe that; and I'll ſpeak Truth, though one ſhould always tell a Lie to a Man; and I don't care, let my Father do what he will, I'm too big to be whipt; ſo I'll tell you plainly, I don't like you, nor love you at all; nor never will, that's more. So, there's your Anſwer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly Thing.

Ben. Look you, young Woman, you may learn to give good Words, however. I ſpoke you fair, d'ye ſee, and civil.—As for your Love, or your Liking, I don't value it of a Rope's End—and mayhap I like you as little as you do me.—What I ſaid was in Obedience to Father. Gad, I fear a Whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one Thing—if you ſhould give ſuch Language at Sea, you'd have a Cat o'Nine Tails laid croſs your Shoulders. Fleſh! who are you? You heard t'other handſome young Woman ſpeak civilly to me, of her own Accord. Whatever you think of yourſelf, Gad, I don't think you are any more to compare to her, than a Can of Small-Beer to a Bowl of Punch.

Miſs *Prue.* Well, and there's a handſome Gentleman, and a fine Gentleman, and a ſweet Gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he ſees you ſpeak to me any more, he'll thraſh your Jacket for you; he will, you great Sea-calf.

Ben. What! do you mean that Fair-weather Spark that was here juſt now? Will he thraſh my Jacket?—Let'n—let'n.—But, an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a ſalt Eel for's Supper, for all that. What does Father mean, to leave me alone, as ſoon as I come home, with ſuch a dirty Dowdy?—Sea-calf? I an't Calf enough to lick your chalked Face, you Cheeſe-

curd,

curd, you?—Marry thee! Oons I'll marry a *Lapland* Witch as ſoon, and live upon ſelling contrary Winds, and wrecked Veſſels.

Miſs *Prue.* I won't be call'd Names, nor I won't be abuſed thus, ſo I won't.—If I were a Man—[*cries*]—you durſt not talk at this Rate—no, you durſt not, you ſtinking Tar-barrel.

SCENE VIII.

[*To them*] *Mrs.* FORESIGHT *and Mrs.* FRAIL.

Mrs. *Foreſight.* They have quarreled, juſt as we could wiſh.

Ben. Tar-barrel? Let your Sweet-heart there call me ſo, if he'll take your Part, your *Tom Eſſence*, and I'll ſay ſomething to him—Gad, I'll lace his Muſk-Doublet for him. I'll make him ſtink; he ſhall ſmell more like a Weaſel than a Civet cat, afore I ha' done with 'en.

Mrs. *Foreſight.* Bleſs me! what's the Matter, Miſs? What, does ſhe cry?—Mr. *Benjamin*, what have you done to her?

Ben. Let her cry: the more ſhe cries, the leſs ſhe'll—ſhe has been gathering foul Weather in her Mouth, and now it rains out at her Eyes.

Mrs. *Foreſight.* Come, Miſs, come along with me; and tell me, poor Child.

Mrs. *Frail.* Lord, what ſhall we do? There's my Brother *Foreſight* and Sir *Sampſon* coming. Siſter, do you take Miſs down into the Parlour, and I'll carry Mr. *Benjamin* into my Chamber; for they muſt not know that they are fallen out.—Come, Sir, will you venture yourſelf with me? [*Looking kindly on him.*

Ben. Venture? Meſs, and that I will, though it were to Sea in a Storm.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

Sir SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT.

Sir *Samp.* I left them together here. What, are they gone? *Ben* is a brisk Boy: he has got her into a Corner—Father's own Son, faith! he'll touzle her, and mouzle her. The Rogue's sharp set, coming from Sea. If he should not stay for saying Grace, old *Foresight*, but fall too without the Help of a Parson, ha? Odd, if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, *A Chip of the old Block.* Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old Prognostication; as melancholic as if thou hadst spilt the Salt, or paired thy Nails on a Sunday.—Come, chear up, look about thee: look up, old Star-gazer.—Now is he poring upon the Ground for a crooked Pin, or an old Horse-nail, with the Head towards him.

Fores. Sir *Sampson*, we'll have the Wedding To-morrow Morning.

Sir *Samp.* With all my Heart.

Fores. At Ten o'Clock; punctually at Ten.

Sir *Samp.* To a Minute, to a Second; thou shall set thy Watch, and the Bridegroom shall observe its Motions; they shall be married to a Minute, go to Bed to a Minute; and, when the Alarm strikes, they shall keep Time like the Figures of St. *Dunstan's* Clock, and *Consummatum est* shall ring all over the Parish!

SCENE X.

[*To them*] SCANDAL.

Scand. Sir *Sampson*, sad News.

Fores. Bless us!

Sir *Samp.* Why, what's the Matter?

Scand. Can't you guess at what ought to afflict you and him, and all of us, more than any Thing else?

Sir *Samp.* Body o'me, I don't know any universal Grievance, but a new Tax, or the Loss of the *Canary* Fleet—

Fleet—unleſs Popery ſhould be landed in the *Weſt*, or the *French* Fleet were at Anchor at *Blackwall*.

Scand. No? Undoubtedly, Mr. *Foreſight* knew all this, and might have prevented it.

Foreſ. 'Tis no Earthquake?

Scand. No, not yet; nor Whirlwind. But we don't know what it may come to—but it has had a Conſequence already that touches us all.

Sir *Samp.* Why, Body o'me, out with it.

Scand. Something has appeared to your Son *Valentine*—he's gone to Bed upon't, and very ill.—He ſpeaks little, yet he ſays he has a World to ſay. Aſks for his Father and the wiſe *Foreſight*; talks of *Raymond Lully*, and the Ghoſt of *Lilly*. He has Secrets to impart, I ſuppoſe, to you Two. I can get nothing out of him but Sighs. He deſires he may ſee you in the Morning; but would not be diſturbed To-night, becauſe he has ſome Buſineſs to do in a Dream.

Sir *Samp.* Hoity toity! what have I to do with his Dreams, or his Divination?—Body o'me, this is a Trick, to defer ſigning the Conveyance. I warrant, the Devil will tell him in a Dream, that he muſt not part with his Eſtate. But I'll bring him a Parſon, to tell him that the Devil's a Liar—or, if that won't do, I'll bring a Lawyer, that ſhall out-lie the Devil; and ſo I'll try whether my Blackguard or his ſhall get the better of the Day. [*Exit.*

SCENE XI.

SCANDAL, FORESIGHT.

Scand. Alas, Mr. *Foreſight*, I am afraid all is not right.—You are a wiſe Man, and a conſcientious Man; a Searcher into Obſcurity and Futurity; and, if you commit an Error, it is with a great deal of Conſideration, and Diſcretion, and Caution.

Foreſ. Ah, good Mr. *Scandal!*

Scand.

Scand. Nay, nay, 'tis manifeſt; I do not flatter you.—But Sir *Sampſon* is haſty, very haſty.—I'm afraid he is not ſcrupulous enough, Mr. *Foreſight.*—He has been wicked; and Heaven grant he may mean well in his Affair with you!—But my Mind gives me, theſe Things cannot be wholly inſignificant. You are wiſe, and ſhould not be over-reached; methinks you ſhould not.

Foreſ. Alas, Mr. *Scandal*—*Humanum eſt errare!*

Scand. You ſay true, Man will err; meer Man will err—but you are ſomething more.—There have been wiſe Men; but they were ſuch as you—Men who conſulted the Stars, and were Obſervers of Omens.—*Solomon* was wiſe: but how? by his Judgement in Aſtrology.—So ſays *Pineda*, in his Third Book and Eighth Chapter.

Foreſ. You are learned, Mr. *Scandal.*

Scand. A Trifler—but a Lover of Art.—And the Wiſe Men of the *Eaſt* owed their Inſtruction to a Star; which is rightly obſerved by *Gregory the Great*, in Favour of Aſtrology! And *Albertus Magnus* makes it the moſt valuable Science—becauſe, ſays he, it teaches us to conſider the Cauſation of Cauſes, in the Cauſes of Things.

Foreſ. I proteſt, I honour you, Mr. *Scandal.*—I did not think you had been read in theſe Matters.—Few young Men are inclined—

Scand. I thank my Stars that have inclined me.—But I fear this Marriage and making over this Eſtate, this transferring of a rightful Inheritance, will bring Judgements upon us. I propheſy it; and I would not have the Fate of *Caſſandra*, not to be believed. *Valentine* is diſturbed, What can be the Cauſe of that? and Sir *Sampſon* is hurried on by an unuſual Violence—I fear he does not act wholly from himſelf; methinks he does not look as he uſed to do.

Foreſ.

Foref. He was always of an impetuous Nature.—But as to this Marriage, I have conſulted the Stars; and all Appearances are proſperous.

Scand. Come, come, Mr. *Foreſight*; let not the Proſpect of worldly Lucre carry you beyond your Judgement, nor againſt your Conſcience.—You are not ſatisfied that you act juſtly.

Foref. How!

Scand. You are not ſatisfied, I ſay.—I am loth to diſcourage you—but it is palpable that you are not ſatisfied.

Foref. How does it appear, Mr. *Scandal?* I think I am very well ſatisfied.

Scand. Either you ſuffer yourſelf to deceive yourſelf; or you do not know yourſelf.

Foref. Pray explain yourſelf.

Scand. Do you ſleep well o'Nights?

Foref. Very well.

Scand. Are you certain? You do not look ſo.

Foref. I am in Health, I think.

Scand. So was *Valentine* this Morning; and looked juſt ſo.

Foref. How! Am I altered any way? I don't perceive it.

Scand. That may be; but your Beard is longer than it was Two Hours ago.

Foref. Indeed? bleſs me!

SCENE XII.

[*To them*] *Mrs.* FORESIGHT.

Mrs. *Foref.* Huſband, will you go to Bed? It's Ten o'Clock. Mr. *Scandal*, your Servant.

Scand. Pox on her, ſhe has interrupted my Deſign—but I muſt work her into the Project.—You keep early Hours, Madam.

Mrs. *Foref.* Mr. *Foreſight* is punctual; we ſit up after him.

Foref.

Foreſ. My Dear, pray lend me your Glaſs, your little Looking-glaſs.

Scand. Pray lend it him, Madam—I'll tell you the Reaſon.—[*She gives him the Glaſs:* Scandal *and ſhe whiſper.*]—My Paſſion for you is grown ſo violent—that I am no longer Maſter of myſelf—I was interrupted in the Morning, when you had Charity enough to give me your Attention; and I had Hopes of finding another Opportunity of explaining myſelf to you—but was diſappointed all this Day; and the Uneaſineſs that has attended me ever ſince, brings me now hither at this unſeaſonable Hour.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Was there ever ſuch Impudence, to make Love to me before my Huſband's Face? I'll ſwear, I'll tell him.

Scand. Do. I'll die a Martyr, rather than diſclaim my Paſſion. But come a little farther this Way; and I'll tell you what Project I had to get him out of the Way, that I might have an Opportunity of waiting upon you. [*Whiſper.* Foreſight *looking in the Glaſs.*

Foreſ. I do not ſee any Revolution here.—Methinks I look with a ſerene and benign Aſpect—pale, a little pale—but the Roſes of theſe Cheeks have been gathered many Years.—Ha! I do not like that ſudden Fluſhing—Gone already!—Hem, hem, hem! faintiſh. My Heart is pretty good; yet it beats: and my Pulſes, ha!—I have none—Mercy on me!—hum!—Yes, here they are.—Gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop! hey! whither will they hurry me?—Now they're gone again—and now I'm faint again; and pale again, and, hem! and my, hem!—Breath, and, hem!—grows ſhort; hem! hem! he, he, hem!

Scand. It takes: purſue it, in the Name of Love and Pleaſure.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* How do you do, Mr. *Foreſight?*

Foreſ. Hum, not ſo well as I thought I was. Lend me your Hand.

Scand. Look you there now.—Your Lady has your Sleep has been unquiet of late.

Foref. Very likely!

Mrs. *Foref.* O, mighty reſtleſs! but I was afraid to tell him ſo.—He has been ſubject to Talking and Starting.

Scand. And did not uſe to be ſo?

Mrs. *Foref.* Never, never; till within theſe Three Nights, I cannot ſay that he has once broken my Reſt ſince we have been married.

Foref. I will go to Bed.

Scand. Do ſo, Mr. *Foreſight*; and ſay your Prayers.—He looks better than he did.

Mrs. *Foref.* Nurſe, Nurſe!

Foref. Do you think ſo, Mr. *Scandal*?

Scand. Yes, yes; I hope this will be gone by Morning: take it in Time.

Foref. I hope ſo.

SCENE XIII.

[*To them*] NURSE.

Mrs. *Foref.* Nurſe, your Maſter is not well; put him to Bed.

Scand. I hope you will be able to ſee *Valentine* in the Morning.—You had beſt take a little Diacodium and Cowſlip-Water, and lye upon your Back; may be you may dream.

Foref. I thank you, Mr. *Scandal*; I will.—Nurſe, let me have a Watch-light, and lay *The Crums of Comfort* by me.

Nurſe. Yes, Sir.

Foref. And—hem, hem! I am very faint.

Scand. No, no, you look much better.

Foref. Do I? And, d'ye hear—bring me, let me ſee—within a Quarter of Twelve—hem—he, hem!—juſt upon the Turning of the Tide, bring me the Urinal.—And I hope, neither the Lord of my Aſcendant

dant nor the Moon will be combuſt; and then I may do well.

Scand. I hope ſo.—Leave that to me; I will erect a Scheme; and I hope I ſhall find both *Sol* and *Venus* in the Sixth Houſe.

Foreſ. I thank you, Mr. *Scandal*; indeed that would be a great Comfort to me. Hem, hem! good Night.

SCENE XIV.

SCANDAL, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT.

Scand. Good Night, good Mr. *Foreſight*. And I hope *Mars* and *Venus* will be in Conjunction—while your Wife and I are together.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Well; and what Uſe do you hope to make of this Project? You don't think that you are ever like to ſucceed in your Deſign upon me?

Scand. Yes, Faith, I do; I have a better Opinion both of you and myſelf, than to deſpair.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Did you ever hear ſuch a Toad?—Hark'ye, Devil; do you think any Woman honeſt?

Scand. Yes, ſeveral, very honeſt—they'll cheat a little at Cards, ſometimes; but that's nothing.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Pſhaw! but virtuous, I mean?

Scand. Yes, Faith, I believe ſome Women are virtuous too; but 'tis, as I believe ſome Men are valiant, through Fear—For why ſhould a Man court Danger, or a Woman ſhun Pleaſure?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* O monſtrous! What are Conſcience and Honour?

Scand. Why, Honour is a public Enemy; and Conſcience a domeſtic Thief: and he that would ſecure his Pleaſure, muſt pay a Tribute to one, and go bribe with t'other. As for Honour, that you have ſecured; for you have purchaſed a perpetual Opportunity for Pleaſure.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* An Opportunity for Pleaſure?

Scand. Ay, your Husband; a Husband is an Opportunity for Pleasure. So you have taken care of Honour, and 'tis the least I can do to take Care of Conscience.

Mrs. *Foresight.* And so you think we are free for one another?

Scand. Yes, Faith, I think so; I love to speak my Mind.

Mrs. *Foresight.* Why then I'll speak my Mind. Now, as to this Affair between you and me. Here you make Love to me; why, I'll confess it does not displease me. Your Person is well enough, and your Understanding is not amiss.

Scand. I have no great Opinion of myself; but, I think, I'm neither deformed, nor a Fool.

Mrs. *Foresight.* But you have a villainous Character; you are a Libertine in Speech, as well as Practice.

Scand. Come, I know what you would say—you think it more dangerous to be seen in Conversation with me, than to allow some other Men the last Favour. You mistake; the Liberty I take in talking is purely affected, for the Service of your Sex. He that first cries out Stop Thief, is often he that has stolen the Treasure. I am a Juggler, that act by Confederacy; and, if you please, we'll put a Trick upon the World.

Mrs. *Foresight.* Ay; but you are such an universal Juggler—that I'm afraid you have a great many Confederates.

Scand. Faith, I'm sound.

Mrs. *Foresight.* O, fie!—I'll swear, you're impudent.

Scand. I'll swear, you're handsome.

Mrs. *Foresight.* Pish, you'd tell me so, though you did not think so.

Scand. And you'd think so, though I should not tell you so: and now I think we know one another pretty well.

Mrs. *Foresight.* O Lord! who's here?

SCENE XV.

[*To them*] *Mrs.* FRAIL *and* BEN.

Ben. Meſs, I love to ſpeak my Mind—Father has nothing to do with me.—Nay, I can't ſay that neither; he has ſomething to do with me. But what does that ſignify? If ſo be, that I ben't minded to be ſteered by him; 'tis as thof he ſhould ſtrive againſt Wind and Tide.

Mrs. *Frail.* Ay but, my Dear, we muſt keep it ſecret, till the Eſtate be ſettled; for, you know, marrying without an Eſtate, is like ſailing in a Ship without Ballaſt.

Ben. He, he, he! why that's true; juſt ſo for all the World it is indeed, as like as Two Cable Ropes.

Mrs. *Frail.* And though I have a good Portion; you know one would not venture all in one Bottom.

Ben. Why that's true again; for mayhap one Bottom may ſpring a Leak. You have hit it indeed; Meſs, you've nicked the Channel.

Mrs. *Frail.* Well, but if you ſhould forſake me after all, you'd break my Heart.

Ben. Break your Heart? I'd rather the *Mary-Gold* ſhould break her Cable in a Storm, as well as I love her. Fleſh, you don't think I'm falſe-hearted, like a Land-man. A Sailor will be honeſt, thof mayhap he has never a Penny of Money in his Pocket.—Mayhap I may not have ſo fair a Face as a Citizen or a Courtier; but, for all that, I've as good Blood in my Veins, and a Heart as ſound as a Biſcuit.

Mrs. *Frail.* And will you love me always?

Ben. Nay, an I love once, I'll ſtick like Pitch; I'll tell you that. Come, I'll ſing you a Song of a Sailor.

Mrs. *Frail.* Hold, there's my Siſter; I'll call her to hear it.

Mrs. *Foref.* Well; I won't go to Bed to my Husband To-night; because I'll retire to my own Chamber, and think of what you have ſaid.

Scand. Well; you'll give me leave to wait upon you to your Chamber-door; and leave you my laſt Inſtructions?

Mrs. *Foref.* Hold, here's my Siſter coming towards us.

Mrs. *Frail.* If it won't interrupt you, I'll entertain you with a Song.

Ben. The Song was made upon one of our Ships-crew's Wife; our Boatſwain made the Song; may-hap you may know her, Sir. Before ſhe married, ſhe was called "Buxom *Joan* of *Deptford*."

Scand. I have heard of her. [*Ben ſings.*

BALLAD.

A Soldier and a Sailor,
A Tinker and a Tailor,
Had once a doubtful Strife, Sir,
To make a Maid a Wife, Sir,
Whoſe Name was Buxom Joan.
For now the Time was ended,
When ſhe no more intended
To lick her Lips at Men, Sir,
And gnaw the Sheets in vain, Sir,
And lye o'Nights alone.

II.

The Soldier ſwore like Thunder,
He loved her more than Plunder;
And ſhew'd her many a Scar, Sir,
That he had brought from far, Sir,
With fighting for her Sake.
The Sailor thought to pleaſe her,
With offering her his Meaſure.
The Tinker too with Mettle,
Said he could mend her Kettle,

III. *But*

III.

But while these Three were prating,
The Sailor ſlily waiting,
Thought if it came about, Sir,
That they ſhould all fall out, Sir,
He then might play his Part:
And juſt ſo as he meant, Sir,
To Loggerheads they went, Sir,
And then he luſty at them,
A Shot 'twixt Wind and Water,
That won this fair Maid's Heart.

Ben. If ſome of our Crew that came to ſee me are not gone; you ſhall ſee, that we Sailors can dance ſo ſometimes, as well as other Folks.—[*Whiſtles.*] I warrant that brings them, an they be within hearing.

Enter Seamen.

Oh, here they be!—and Fiddles along with them. Come, my Lads, let's have a Round, and I'll make one.

[*Dance.*

We're merry Folks, we Sailors; we han't much to care for. Thus we live at Sea; eat Biſcuit, and drink Flip; put on a clean Shirt once a Quarter—come home, and lye with our Landladies once a Year, get rid of a little Money; and then put off with the next fair Wind. How d'ye like us?

Mrs. *Frail.* Oh! you are the happieſt, merrieſt Men alive!

Mrs. *Foreſ.* We're beholden to Mr. *Benjamin* for this Entertainment.—I believe it is late.

Ben. Why, forſooth, an you think ſo, you had beſt go to Bed. For my Part, I mean to toſs a Can, and remember my Sweet-heart, afore I turn in; may-hap I may dream of her!

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Mr. *Scandal*, you had beſt go to Bed, and dream too.

Scand. Why, Faith, I have a good lively Imagination; and can dream as much to the Purpoſe as another,

if I set about it. But Dreaming is the poor Retreat of a lazy, hopeless, and imperfect Lover; 'tis the last Glimpse of Love to worn-out Sinners, and the faint Dawning of a Bliss to wishing Girls and growing Boys.

There's nought but willing waking Love that can
Make blest the ripen'd Maid and finish'd Man.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

VALENTINE's *Lodging.*

SCANDAL *and* JEREMY.

Scand. WELL, is your Master ready? does he look madly, and talk madly?

Jeremy. Yes, Sir; you need make no great Doubt of that; he that was so near turning Poet Yesterday Morning, can't be much to seek in playing the Madman To-day.

Scand. Would he have *Angelica* acquainted with the Reason of his Design?

Jeremy. No, Sir, not yet.—He has a Mind to try whether his playing the Madman won't make her play the Fool, and fall in Love with him; or at least own that she has loved him all this while, and concealed it.

Scand. I saw her take Coach just now with her Maid, and think I heard her bid the Coachman drive hither.

Jeremy.

Jeremy. Like enough, Sir; for I told her Maid this Morning, my Maſter was run ſtark mad, only for Love of her Miſtreſs. I hear a Coach ſtop: if it ſhould be ſhe, Sir, I believe he would not ſee her, till he hears how ſhe takes it.

Scand. Well, I'll try her—'tis ſhe; here ſhe comes.

SCENE II.

[*To them*] ANGELICA *with* JENNY.

Ang. Mr. *Scandal*, I ſuppoſe you don't think it a Novelty, to ſee a Woman viſit a Man at his own Lodgings in a Morning?

Scandal. Not upon a kind Occaſion, Madam. But, when a Lady comes tyrannically to inſult a ruined Lover, and make manifeſt the cruel Triumphs of her Beauty; the Barbarity of it ſomething ſurprizes me.

Ang. I don't like Raillery from a ſerious Face.—Pray tell me what is the Matter?

Jeremy. No ſtrange Matter, Madam; my Maſter's mad, that's all. I ſuppoſe your Ladyſhip has thought him ſo a great while.

Ang. How d'ye mean, mad?

Jeremy. Why, faith, Madam, he's mad for Want of his Wits, juſt as he was poor for Want of Money. His Head is e'en as light as his Pockets; and any body that has a Mind to a bad Bargain, can't do better than to beg him for his Eſtate.

Ang. If you ſpeak Truth, your endeavouring at Wit is very unſeaſonable—

Scand. She's concerned, and loves him! [*Aside.*

Angel. Mr. *Scandal*, you can't think me guilty of ſo much Inhumanity, as not to be concerned for a Man I call my own; myſelf obliged to.—Pray tell me the Truth!

Scand. Faith, Madam, I wiſh telling a Lie would mend the Matter. But this is no new Effect of an unſucceſsful Paſſion.

Ang. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think! Yet I should be vext to have a Trick put upon me!—May I not be mistaken?

Scand. I'm afraid the Physician is not willing you should see him yet.—*Jeremy*, go in, and inquire.

SCENE III.

Angel. Ha! I saw him wink and smile! I fancy a Trick.—I'll try. [*Aside.*]—I would dissemble to all the World, Sir, a Failing which I must own to you—I fear, my Happiness depends upon the Recovery of *Valentine*. Therefore I conjure you, as you are his Friend, and as you have Compassion upon one fearful of Affliction, to tell me what I am to hope for—I cannot speak—But you may tell me, for you know what I would ask.

Scand. So, this is pretty plain!—Be not too much concerned, Madam: I hope, his Condition is not desperate. An Acknowledgement of Love from you, pehaps, may work a Cure; as the Fear of your Aversion occasioned his Distemper.

Ang. Say you so? nay then I'm convinced: and if I don't play Trick for Trick, may I never taste the Pleasure of Revenge. [*Aside.*]—Acknowledgement of Love! I find you have mistaken my Compassion, and think me guilty of a Weakness I am a Stranger to. But I have too much Sincerity to deceive you, and too much Charity to suffer him to be deluded with vain Hopes. Good-nature and Humanity oblige me to be concerned for him; but to love, is neither in my Power nor Inclination; and if he can't be cured without I suck the Poison from his Wounds, I'm afraid he won't recover his Senses till I lose mine.

Scand. Hey, brave Woman, i'faith!—Won't you see him then, if he desire it?

Ang.

Ang. What ſignify a Madman's Deſires? Beſides, 'twou'd make me uneaſy—If I don't ſee him, perhaps my Concern for him may leſſen.—If I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himſelf; and now the Surprize is over, methinks I am not half ſo ſorry as I was!

Scand. So, faith, Good-nature works apace; you were confeſſing juſt now an Obligation to his Love.

Ang. But I have conſidered that Paſſions are unreaſonable and involuntary. If he loves, he can't help it; and if I don't love, I can't help it; no more than he can help his being a Man, or I my being a Woman; or no more than I can help my Want of Inclination to ſtay longer here.—Come, *Jenny*.

SCENE IV.

SCANDAL, JEREMY.

Scand. Humph!—An admirable Compoſition, Faith, this ſame Womankind!

Jeremy. What, is ſhe gone, Sir?

Scand. Gone? why ſhe was never here, nor any where elſe; nor I don't know her if I ſee her, nor you neither.

Jeremy. Good lack! what's the Matter now? are any more of us to be mad? Why, Sir, my Maſter longs to ſee her; and is almoſt mad in good earneſt, with the joyful News of her being here.

Scand. We are all under a Miſtake.—Aſk no Queſtions, for I can't reſolve you; but I'll inform your Maſter. In the mean Time, if our Project ſucceed no better with his Father than it does with his Miſtreſs, he may deſcend from his Exaltation of Madneſs into the Road of common Senſe, and be content only to be made a Fool with other reaſonable People. I hear Sir *Sampſon*. You know your Cue; I'll to your Maſter.

SCENE V.

JEREMY, Sir SAMPSON LEGEND, and a Lawyer.

Sir Samps. D'ye see, Mr. *Buckram*, here's the Paper signed with his own Hand.

Buckram. Good, Sir. And the Conveyance is ready drawn in this Box, if he be ready to sign and seal.

Sir *Samps.* Ready! Body o'me, he must be ready: His Sham-Sickness shan't excuse him.—O, here's his Scoundrel. Sirrah, where's your Master?

Jeremy. Ah, Sir, he's quite gone!

Sir *Samps.* Gone! What, he is not dead?

Jeremy. No, Sir, not dead.

Sir *Samps.* What, is he gone out of Town, run away? ha! has he tricked me? Speak, Varlet.

Jeremy. No, no, Sir, he's safe enough, Sir, an he were but as sound, poor Gentleman! He is indeed here, Sir, and not here, Sir.

Sir *Samps.* Hey-day, Rascal, do you banter me? Sirrah, d'ye banter me?—Speak, Sirrah; where is he? for I will find him.

Jeremy. Would you could, Sir; for he has lost himself. Indeed, Sir, I have almost broke my Heart about him—I can't refrain Tears when I think of him, Sir; I'm as melancholy for him as a Passing-bell, Sir; or a Horse in a Pound.

Sir *Samps.* A Pox confound your Similitudes, Sir!—Speak to be understood; and tell me in plain Terms what the Matter is with him, or I'll crack your Fool's Skull.

Jeremy. Ah, you've hit it, Sir; that's the Matter with him, Sir; his Skull's cracked, poor Gentleman!; he's stark mad, Sir!

Sir *Samps.* Mad!

Buckr. What, is he *Non Compos?*

Jeremy. Quite *Non Compos*, Sir!

Buckram.

Buckram. Why then all's obliterated, Sir *Sampſon*. If he be *Non Compos Mentis*, his Act and Deed will be of no Effect; it is not good in Law.

Sir *Samp.* Gads, I won't believe it; let me ſee him, Sir.—Mad! I'll make him find his Senſes.

Jeremy. Mr. *Scandal* is with him, Sir; I'll knock at the Door. [*Goes to the Scene, which opens.*

SCENE VI.

Sir SAMPSON, VALENTINE, SCANDAL, JEREMY, *and* LAWYER; VALENTINE *upon a Couch, diſorderly dreſſed.*

Sir *Sampſ.* How now? what's here to do?

Valent. Ha! who's that? [*Starting.*

Scand. For Heaven's ſake, ſoftly, Sir, and gently; don't provoke him.

Valent. Anſwer me, who is that? and that?

Sir *Samp.* Gads bobs, does he not know me? is he miſchievous? I'll ſpeak gently.—*Val, Val*, do'ſt thou not know me, Boy? not know thy own Father, *Val*? I am thy own Father; and this, honeſt *Brief Buckram* the Lawyer.

Valent. It may be ſo—I did not know you—the World is full.—There are People that we do know, and People that we do not know; and yet the Sun ſhines upon all alike.—There are Fathers that have many Children; and there are Children that have many Fathers—'tis ſtrange! But I am Truth, and come to give the World the Lie.

Sir *Sampſ.* Body o'me, I know not what to ſay to him.

Valint. Why does that Lawyer wear Black?—does he carry his Conſcience without-ſide? Lawyer, what art thou? doſt thou know me?

Buckr. O Lord, what muſt I ſay?—Yes, Sir.

Val. Thou lieſt; for I am Truth. 'Tis hard I cannot get a Livelihood amongſt you. I have been

ſworn out of *Weſtminſter-Hall* the firſt Day of every Term—let me ſee—no matter how long—But I'll tell you one Thing; it is a Queſtion that would puzzle an Arithmetician, if ſhould aſk him whether the Bible ſaves more Souls in *Weſtminſter Abbey*, or damns more in *Weſtminſter Hall*. For my Part, I am Truth, and can't tell; I have very few Acquaintance with both.

Sir Samp. Body o'me, he talks ſenſibly in his Madneſs—Has he no Intervals?

Jer. Very ſhort, Sir.

Buckr. Sir, I can do you no Service while he's in this Condition. Here's your Paper, Sir.—He may do more Miſchief if I ſtay.—The Conveyance is ready, Sir, if he recover his Senſes.

SCENE.

Sir SAMPSON, VALENTINE, SCANDAL, JEREMY,

Sir Samp. Hold, hold, don't you go yet.

Scand. You'd better let him go, Sir, and ſend for him if there be Occaſion; for I fancy his Preſence provokes him more.

Val. Is the Lawyer gone? 'Tis well, then we may drink about without going together by the Ears.—Heigh ho! what a Clock is it?—My Father here! Your Bleſſing, Sir.

Sir Samp. He recovers!—Bleſs thee, *Val.*—How doſt thou do, Boy?

Val. Thank you, Sir, pretty well.—I have been a little out of Order.—Won't you please to ſit, Sir?

Sir Samp. Ay, Boy.—Come, thou ſhalt ſit down by me.

Val. Sir, 'tis my Duty to wait.

Sir Samp. No, no: come, come, ſit thee down, honeſt *Val*, how doſt thou do? Let me feel thy Pulſe.—Oh, pretty well now.—*Val.* Body o'me, I am ſorry to ſee thee indiſpoſed: but I'm glad thou art better, honeſt *Val.*

Val.

Val. I thank you, Sir.

Scand. Miracle! The Monſter grows loving. [*Aſide.*

Sir *Sampſ.* Let me feel thy Hand again, *Val.* It does not ſhake—I believe thou canſt write, *Val.* Ha, Boy! thou canſt write thy Name, *Val?*—*Jeremy*, ſtep and overtake Mr. *Buckram*, I bid him make haſte back with the Conveyance—quick! [*He whiſpers to Jeremy.*

SCENE VIII.

Sir SAMPSON, VALENTINE, SCANDAL.

Scand. That ever I ſhould ſuſpect ſuch a Heathen of any Remorſe! [*Aſide.*

Sir *Sampſ.* Do'ſt thou know this Paper, *Val?* I know thou'rt honeſt, and will perform Articles.

[*Shews him the Paper, but holds it out of his Reach.*

Val. Pray let me ſee it, Sir. You hold it ſo far off, that I can't tell whether I know it or no.

Sir *Sampſ.* See it, Boy! Ay, ay, why thou do'ſt ſee it—'tis thy own Hand, *Val.* Why, let me ſee, I can read it as plain as can be: Look you here [*Reads.*] *The Condition of this Obligation*—Look you, as plain as can be, ſo it begins—And then at the Bottom—*As witneſs my Hand*, VALENTINE LEGEND, in great Letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the Noſe in one's Face—What, are my Eyes better than thine? I believe I can read it farther off yet—let me ſee. [*Stretches his Arm as far as he can.*

Val. Will you please to let me hold it, Sir?

Sir *Sampſ.* Let thee hold it, ſay'ſt thou?—Ay, with all my Heart.—What Matter is it who holds it? What need any body hold it?—I'll put it in my Pocket, *Val*, and then nobody need hold it. [*Puts the Paper in his Pocket.*] There, *Val*: it's ſafe enough, Boy,—But thou ſhalt have it as ſoon as thou haſt ſet thy Hand to another Paper, little *Val.*

SCENE

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] JEREMY, *with* BUCKRAM.

Val. What, is my bad Genius here again? Oh no, 'tis the Lawyer with an itching Palm; and he's come to be ſcratched.—My Nails are not long enough.—Let me have a Pair of red hot Tongs quickly, quickly; and you ſhall ſee me act St. *Dunſtan*, and lead the Devil by the Noſe.

Buckr. O Lord, let me be gone! I'll not venture myſelf with a Madman.

SCENE X.

Sir SAMPSON, VALENTINE, SCANDAL, JEREMY.

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you need not run ſo faſt; Honeſty will not overtake you.—Ha, ha, ha, the Rogue found me out to be *in Forma Pauperis* preſently.

Sir *Samp.* Ooons! what a Vexation is here! I know not what to do, or ſay, nor which Way to go.

Val. Who's that, that's out of his Way?—I am Truth, and can ſet him right.—Harkee, Friend, the ſtrait Road is the worſt Way you can go.—He that follows his Noſe always, will very often be led into a Stink. *Erubatum eſt.*—But what are you for? Religion, or Politicks? There's a Couple of Topicks for you, no more like one another than Oil and Vinegar; and yet thoſe two, beaten together by a State-Cook, make Sauce for the whole Nation.

Sir *Samp.* What the Devil had I to do, ever to beget Sons? why did I ever marry?

Val. Becauſe thou wert a Monſter, old Boy. The two greateſt Monſters in the World, are a Man and a Woman. What's thy Opinion?

Sir *Samp.* Why, my Opinion is, that thoſe two Monſters joined together make yet a greater; that's a Man and his Wife.

Val.

Val. Aha, old True-penny! ſay'ſt thou ſo? Thou haſt nicked it.—But it is wonderful ſtrange, *Jeremy*.

Jeremy. What is, Sir?

Val. That grey Hairs ſhould cover a green Head—and I make a Fool of my Father. What's here? *Ezra Patre*, or a bearded *Sibyl*? If Prophecy comes, Truth muſt give Place.

SCENE XI.

Sir SAMPSON, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FRAIL.

Foreſ. What ſays he? What, did he propheſy? Ha, Sir *Sampſon!* Bleſs us! how are we?

Sir *Sampſ.* Are we? A Pox o'your Prognoſtication!—Why, we are Fools as we uſed to be.—Ooons, that you could not foreſee that the Moon would predominate, and my Son be mad!—Where's your Oppoſitions, your Trines, and your Quadrates?—What did your *Ganſan* and your *Ptolemy* tell you? Your *Meſſahalah* and your *Longmontanus*, your Harmony of Chiromancy with Aſtrology. Ah! Pox on't, that I who know the World, and Men and Manners, who don't believe a Syllable in the Sky and Stars, and Sun and Almanacks, and Truth, ſhould be directed by a Dreamer, an Omen-hunter, and defer Buſineſs in Expectation of a lucky Hour! when, Body o'me! there never was a lucky Hour after the firſt Opportunity.

SCENE XII.

SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, *and Mrs.* FRAIL.

Foreſ. Ah, Sir *Sampſon*, Heaven help your Head!—This is none of your lucky Hour—*Nemo omnibus Horis ſapit!* What, is he gone, and in Contempt of Science?

Science? Ill Stars and unconvertible Ignorance attend him!

Scand. You muſt excuſe his Paſſion, Mr. *Foreſight*; for he has been heartily vexed.—His Son is *Non compos Mentis*, and thereby incapable of making any Conveyance in Law; ſo that all his Meaſures are diſappointed.

Foreſ. Ha! ſay you ſo?

Mrs. *Frail.* What, has my Sea-lover loſt his Anchor of Hope then? [*Aſide to Mrs.* Foreſight.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* O Siſter, what will you do with him?

Mrs. *Frail.* Do with him? Send him to Sea again in the next ſoul Weather.—He's uſed to an inconſtant Element, and won't be ſurpriſed to ſee the Tide turned.

Foreſ. Wherein was I miſtaken, not to foreſee this? [*Cauſing.*

Scand. Madam, you and I can tell him ſomething elſe that he did not foreſee, and more particularly relating to his own Fortune! [*Aſide to Mrs.* Foreſight.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* What do you mean? I don't underſtand you.

Scand. Hem, ſoftly—the Pleaſures of laſt Night, my Dear; too conſiderable to be forgot ſo ſoon.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Laſt Night? and what would your Impudence infer from laſt Night? Laſt Night was like the Night before, I think.

Scand. Sdeath, do you make no Difference between me and your Huſband?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Not much—he's ſuperſtitious; and you are mad, in my Opinion!

Scand. You make me mad.—You are not ſerious?—Pray recollect yourſelf.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* O yes, now I remember, you were very impertinent and impudent—and would have come to Bed to me.

Scand. And did not?

Mrs.

Mrs. *Foref.* Did not! With what Face can you ask the Question?

Scand. This I have heard of before, but never believed. I have been told, she had that admirable Quality of forgetting to a Man's Face in the Morning, that she had lain with him all Night; and denying that she had done Favours with more Impudence than she could grant them.—Madam, I'm your humble Servant, and honour you.—You look pretty well, Mr. *Foresight*. How did you rest last Night?

Foref. Truly, Mr. *Scandal*, I was so taken up with broken Dreams and distracted Visions, that I remember little.

Scand. 'Twas a very forgetting Night.—But would you not talk with *Valentine*? Perhaps you may understand him; I am apt to believe, there is something mysterious in his Discourses, and sometimes rather think him inspired than mad.

Foref. You speak with singular good Judgement, Mr. *Scandal*, truly.—I am inclining to your *Turkish* Opinion in this Matter, and do reverence a Man whom the Vulgar think mad. Let us go to him,

Mrs. *Frail.* Sister, do you stay with them; I'll find out my Lover, and give him his Discharge, and come to you. On my Conscience, here he comes.

SCENE XIII.

Mrs. FRAIL, *Ben.*

Ben. All mad, I think.—Flesh, I believe all the *Calentures* of the Sea are come ashore, for my Part.

Mrs. *Frail.* Mr. *Benjamin* in Choler?

Ben. No, I'm pleased well enough, now I have found you.—Mess, I have had such a Hurricane upon your Account yonder.

Mrs. *Frail.* My Account?—Pray, what's the Matter?

Ben.

Ben. Why, Father came, and found me squabbling with you chitty-faced Thing, as he would have me marry—ſo he aſked what was the Matter.—He aſked in a ſurly ſort of a Way.—(It ſeems Brother *Val* is gone mad, and ſo that put'n into a Paſſion; but what did I know that? what's that to me?)—So he aſked in a ſurly ſort of Manner—and, Gad, I anſwered 'em as ſurlily. What tho' he be my Father, I an't bound Prentice to 'em:—ſo, faith, I told'n in plain Terms, if I were minded to marry, I'd marry to pleaſe myſelf, not him: and for the young Woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her Sampler, and make Dirt-pies, than to look after a Huſband; for my Part, I was none of her Man—I had another Voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

Mrs. Frail. So then, you intend to go to Sea again?

Ben. Nay, nay, my Mind run upon you—but I would not tell him ſo much.—So he ſaid, he'd make my Heart ake; and if ſo be that he could get a Woman to his Mind, he'd marry himſelf. Gad, ſays I, an you play the Fool and marry at theſe Years, there's more Danger of your Head's aking than my Heart!—He was wondy angry when I gav'n that Wipe—he had'nt a Word to ſay; and ſo I left'n, and the green Girl together; may-hap the Bee may bite, and he'll marry her himſelf—with all my Heart!

Mrs. Frail. And were you this undutiful and graceleſs Wretch to your Father?

Ben. Then why was he graceleſs firſt?—If I am undutiful and graceleſs, why did he beget me ſo? I did not get myſelf.

Mrs. Frail. O Impiety! How have I been miſtaken! What an inhuman mercileſs Creature have I fix'd my Heart upon! O, I am happy to have diſcovered the Shelves and Quickſands that lurk beneath that faithleſs ſmiling Face!

Ben.

Ben. Hey-toss! what's the Matter now? why you ben't angry, be you?

Mrs. *Frail.* O see me no more—for thou wert born among Rocks, suckled by Whales, cradled in a Tempest, and whistled to by Winds; and thou art come forth with Fins and Scales, and three Rows of Teeth, a most outrageous Fish of Prey.

Ben. O Lord, O Lord, she's mad, poor young Woman! Love has turned her Senses, her Brain is quite overset. Well-a-day, how shall I do to set her to rights?

Mrs. *Frail.* No, no, I am not mad, Monster; I am wise enough to find you out.—Hadst thou the Impudence to aspire at being a Husband, with that stubborn and disobedient Temper?—You, that know not how to submit to a Father, presume to have a sufficient Stock of Duty to undergo a Wife? I should have been finely fobbed indeed, very finely fobbed!

Ben. Harkee, forsooth; if so be that you are in your right Senses, d'ye see, for aught as I perceive, I'm like to be finely fobbed—if I have got Anger here upon your Account, and you are tacked about already!—What d'ye mean, after all your fair Speeches, and stroaking my Cheeks, and kissing and hugging, what would you sheer off so? would you, and leave me aground?

Mrs. *Frail.* No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which Way you will.

Ben. What, are you false-hearted then?

Mrs. *Frail.* Only the Wind's changed.

Ben. More Shame for you!—The Wind's changed? It is an ill Wind blows nobody good.—Mayhap I have a good Riddance on you, if these be your Tricks.—What, did you mean all this while to make a Fool of me?

Mrs. *Frail.* Any Fool, but a Husband.

Ben. Husband! Gad, I would not be your Husband, if you would have me, now I know your Mind, tho'

you

you had your Weight in Gold and Jewels, and that I loved you never ſo well.

Mrs. Frail. Why, could'ſt thou love, *Perjur'd?*

Ben. No Matter what I could do; don't call Names—I don't love you ſo well as to bear that, whatever I did. —I'm glad you tell yourſelf, Miſtreſs;—let them marry you as don't know you.—Gad, I know you too well, by fad Experience; I believe he that marries you will go to Sea in a Hen-pecked Frigate.—I believe that, young Woman!—and mayhap may come to an Anchor at *Cuckolds Point*; ſo there's a Doſe for you, take it as you will; mayhap you may hollow after me when I won't come to.

Mrs. Frail. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on't! *My true Love is gone to Sea!* [*Sings.*

SCENE XIV.

Mrs. FRAIL, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT.

Mrs. Frail. O Siſter, had you come a Minute ſooner, you would have ſeen the Reſolution of a Lover.—Honeſt *Tarr* and I are parted;—and with the ſame Indifference that we met.—On my Life, I am half vexed at the Inſenſibility of a Brute that I deſpiſed.

Mrs. Foreſ. What then, he bore it moſt heroically?

Mrs. Frail. Moſt tyrannically—for you ſee he has got the Start of me; and I the poor forſaken Maid am left complaining on the Shore. But I'll tell you a Hint that he has given me. Sir *Sampſon* is enraged, and talks deſperately of committing Matrimony himſelf.—If he has a Mind to throw himſelf away, he can't do it more effectually than upon me, if we could bring it about.

Mrs. Foreſ. O hang him, old Fox! he's too cunning; beſides, he hates both you and me.—But I have a Project in my Head for you, and I have gone a good Way towards it. I have almoſt made a Bargain with *Jeremy*, *Valentine's* Man, to ſell his Maſter to us.

Mrs. Frail. Sell him? how?

Mrs.

Mrs. *Foresight*, *Valentine* runs upon *Angelica*, and took me for her; and *Jeremy* says, will take any body for her that he impoſes on him.—Now I have promiſed him Mountains, if in one of his mad Fits he will bring you to him in her ſtead, and get you married together, and put to Bed together—and after Conſummation, Girl, there's no revoking. And if he ſhould recover his Senſes, he'll be glad at leaſt to make you a good Settlement.—Here they come; ſtand aſide a little, and tell me how you like the Deſign.

SCENE X.

Mrs. FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FRAIL, VALENTINE, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *and* JEREMY.

Scand. And have you given your Maſter a Hint of their Plot upon him? [*To* Jeremy.

Jeremy. Yes, Sir, he ſays, he'll favour it, and miſtake her for *Angelica*.

Scand. It may make us Sport.

Foreſ. Mercy on us!

Val. Huſht!—Interrupt me not—I'll whiſper Prediction to thee, and thou ſhalt propheſy;—I am Truth, and can teach thy Tongue a new Trick.—I have told thee what's paſt—Now I'll tell what's to come.—Doſt thou know what will happen To-morrow?—Anſwer me not—for I will tell thee. To-morrow Knaves will thrive through Craft, and Fools through Fortune; and Honeſty will go as it did, Froſt-nipt in a Summer Suit. Aſk me Queſtions concerning To-morrow.

Scand. Aſk him, Mr. *Foreſight*.

Foreſ. Pray what will be done at Court?

Val. *Scandal* will tell you.—I am Truth; I never come there.

Foreſ. In the City?

Val. Oh, Prayers will be ſaid in empty Churches, at the uſual Hours. Yet you will ſee ſuch zealous Faces behind Counters, as if Religion were to be ſold in every Shop. Oh! Things will go methodically in the

the City. The Clocks will ſtrike Twelve at Noon, and the horned Herd low in the Exchange at Two. Huſbands and Wives will drive diſtinct Trades; and Care and Pleaſure ſeparately occupy the Family. Coffee-houſes will be full of Smoke and Stratagem. And the crop Prentice that ſweeps his Maſter's Shop in the Morning, may ten to one dirty his Sheets before Night. But there are two Things that you will ſee very ſtrange; which are, wanton Wives with their Legs at Liberty, and tame Cuckolds with Chains about their Necks.—But hold, I muſt examine you before I go farther; you look ſuſpiciouſly. Are you a Huſband.

Foreſ. I am married.

Val. Poor Creature! Is your Wife of *Covent-Garden* Pariſh?

Foreſ. No; *St. Martin's in the Fields.*

Val. Alas; poor Man! his Eyes are ſunk, and his Hands ſhriveled; his Legs dwindled, and his Back bowed. Pray, pray, for a Metamorphoſis.—Change thy Shape, and ſhake off Age; get thee *Medea's* Kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth with labouring, callous Hands, a Chine of Steel, and *Atlas'* Shoulders. Let *Taliacotius* trim the Calves of twenty Chairmen, and make thee Pedeſtals to ſtand erect upon; and look Matrimony in the Face. Ha, ha, ha! That a Man ſhould have a Stomach to a Wedding Supper, when the Pigeons ought rather to be laid to his Feet! ha, ha, ha!

Foreſ. His Frenzy is very high now, Mr. *Scandal.*

Scand. I believe it is a Spring tide.

Foreſ. Very likely truly; you underſtand theſe Matters. Mr. *Scandal*, I ſhall be very glad to confer with you about theſe Things which he has uttered.—His Sayings are very myſterious and hieroglyphical.

Val. Oh, why would *Angelica* be abſent from my Eyes ſo long?

Jeremy. She's here, Sir.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Now, Siſter.

Mrs. *Frail.* O Lord, what muſt I ſay?

Scand.

Scand. Humour him, Madam, by all Means.

Val. Where is ſhe? Oh, I ſee her!—She comes, like Riches, Health, and Liberty, at once, to a deſpairing, ſtarving, and abandoned Wretch.—Oh welcome, welcome!

Mrs. *Frail.* How d'ye, Sir? Can I ſerve you?

Val. Hankee—I have a Secret to tell you—*Endymion* and the Moon ſhall meet us upon *Mount Latmus*, and we'll be married in the dead of Night.—But ſay not a Word. *Hymen* ſhall put his Torch into a dark Lantern, that it may be ſecret; and *Juno* ſhall give her *Peacock* Poppy-water, that he may fold his ogling Tail, and *Argus's* hundred Eyes be ſhut, ha? Nobody ſhall know, but *Jeremy*.

Mrs. *Frail.* No, no, we'll keep it ſecret; it ſhall be done preſently.

Val. The ſooner the better—*Jeremy*, come hither—cloſer—that none may over-hear us;—*Jeremy*, I can tell you News. *Angelica* is turned Nun; and I am turning Fryar: and yet we'll marry one another in ſpite of the Pope.—Get me a Coul and Beads, that I may play my Part—for ſhe'll meet me two Hours hence in black and white, and a long Veil to cover the Project; and we won't ſee one another's Faces, till we have done ſomething to be aſhamed of—and then we'll bluſh once for all.

SCENE XVI.

[*To them*] TATTLE *and* ANGELICA.

Jeremy. I'll take Care, and—

Val. Whiſper.

Ang. Nay, Mr. *Tattle*, if you make Love to me, you ſpoil my Deſign; for I intend to make you my Confident.

Tatt. But, Madam, to throw away your Perſon, ſuch a Perſon! and ſuch a Fortune, on a Madman!

Ang.

Ang. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell any body ſo.

Scand. How's this? *Tattle* making Love to *Angelica?*

Tatt. Tell, Madam? Alas, you don't know me.—I have much ado to tell your Ladyſhip how long I have been in Love with you—but, encouraged by the Impoſſibility of *Valentine's* making any more Addreſſes to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmoſt Paſſion of my Heart. Oh, Madam, look upon us both. There, you ſee the Ruins of a poor decayed Creature!—Here, a compleat lively Figure, with Youth and Health, and all his five Senſes in Perfection, Madam; and to all this, the moſt paſſionate Lover—

Ang. O, fie for Shame, hold your Tongue. A paſſionate Lover, and five Senſes in Perfection! When you are as mad as *Valentine*, I'll believe you love me; and the maddeſt ſhall take me.

Val. It is enough. Ha! Who's here?

Mrs. *Frail.* O Lord, her coming will ſpoil all. [*To* Jeremy.

Jeremy. No, no, Madam; he won't know her: if he ſhould, I can perſuade him.

Val. Scandal, who are theſe? Foreigners? If they are, I'll tell you what I think.—Get away all the Company but *Angelica*, that I may diſcover my Deſign to her. [*Whiſper.*

Scand. I will—I have diſcovered ſomething of *Tattle*, that is of a Piece with Mrs. *Frail.* He courts *Angelica*; if we could contrive to couple them together—Hark'ee— [*Whiſper.*

Mrs. *Foreſ.* He won't know you, Couſin; he knows nobody.

Foreſ. But he knows more than any body.—Oh, Niece, he knows Things paſt and to come, and all the profound Secrets of Time.

Tatt.

Tatt. Look you, Mr. *Foreſight*; it is not my Way to make many Words of Matters, and ſo I ſhan't ſay much.—But in ſhort, d'ye ſee, I will hold you a hundred Pound now, that I know more Secrets than he.

Foreſ. How? I cannot read that Knowledge in your Face, Mr. *Tattle*.—Pray, what do you know?

Tatt. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, Sir?—Read it in my Face? No, Sir, it is written in my Heart; and ſafer there, Sir, than Letters writ in Juice of Lemon, for no Fire can fetch it out. I am no Blab, Sir.

Valent. Acquaint *Jeremy* with it; he may eaſily bring it about.—They are welcome, and I'll tell them ſo myſelf. [*To* Scandal.] What, do you look ſtrange upon me?—Then I muſt be plain. [*Coming up to them.*] I am Truth, and hate an old Acquaintance with a new Face.

[Scandal *goes aſide with* Jeremy.

Tatt. Do you know me, *Valentine*?

Val. You? Who are you? No, I hope not.

Tatt. I am *Jack Tattle*, your Friend.

Val. My Friend! what to do? I am no married Man, and thou canſt not lye with my Wife: I am very poor, and thou canſt not borrow Money of me. Then what Employment have I for a Friend?

Tatt. Ha! A good open Speaker, and not to be truſted with a Secret.

Ang. Do you know me, *Valentine*?

Val. Oh, very well.

Ang. Who am I?

Val. You're a Woman—one to whom Heaven gave Beauty, when it grafted Roſes on a Briar. You are the Reflection of Heaven in a Pond; and he that leaps at you is ſunk. You are all white, a Sheet of lovely ſpotleſs Paper, when you firſt are born; but you are to be ſcrawled and blotted by every Gooſe's Quill. I know you; for I loved a Woman, and loved

her ſo long, that I found out a ſtrange Thing: I found out what a Woman was good for.

Tatt. Ay, pr'ythee, what's that?

Val. Why, to keep a Secret.

Tatt. O Lord!

Val. O, exceeding good to keep a Secret: for, though ſhe ſhould tell, yet ſhe is not to be believed.

Tatt. Ha! good again, faith.

Val. I would have Muſick—Sing me the Song that I like—

SONG.

I.

I tell thee, Charmion, could I Time retrieve,
And could again begin to love and live,
To you I ſhould my earlieſt Offering give;
I know, my Eyes would lead my Heart to you,
And I ſhould all my Vows and Oaths renew;
But, to be plain, I never would be true.

II.

For, by our weak and weary Truth, I find,
Love hates to center in a Point aſſign'd;
But runs with Joy the Circle of the Mind,
Then never let us chain what ſhould be free,
Bleſt for Relief of either Sex agree:
Since Women love to change, and ſo do we.

No more; for I am melancholy. [*Walks muſing.*

Jeremy. I'll do't, Sir. [*To* Scandal.

Scand. Mr. *Foreſight*, we had beſt leave him. He may grow outrageous, and do Miſchief.

Foreſ. I will be directed by you.

Jeremy [to Mrs. *Frail.*] You'll meet, Madam.—I'll take care every thing ſhall be ready.

Mrs. *Frail.* Thou ſhalt do what thou wilt; in ſhort, I will deny thee nothing.

Tatt.

Tatt. Madam, ſhall I wait upon you? [*To* Angelica.

Ang. No, I'll ſtay with him.—Mr. *Scandal* will protect me. Aunt, Mr. *Tattle* deſires you would give him Leave to wait on you.

Tatt. Pox on't, there's no coming off, now ſhe has ſaid that—Madam, will you do me the Honour?

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Mr. *Tattle* might have uſed leſs Ceremony!

SCENE XVII.

ANGELICA, VALENTINE, SCANDAL.

Scand. Jeremy, follow *Tattle*.

Ang. Mr. *Scandal*, I only ſtay till my Maid comes, and becauſe I had a Mind to be rid of Mr. *Tattle*.

Scand. Madam, I am very glad that I over-heard a better Reaſon, which you gave to Mr. *Tattle*; for his Impertinence forced you to acknowledge a Kindneſs for *Valentine*, which you denied to all his Sufferings and my Solications. So I'll leave him to make Uſe of the Diſcovery; and your Ladyſhip to the free Confeſſion of your Inclinations.

Ang. Oh Heavens! You won't leave me alone with a Madman?

Scand. No, Madam; I only leave a Madman to his Remedy.

SCENE XVIII.

ANGELICA, VALENTINE.

Val. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myſelf.

Ang. Ay, but if I don't fit you, I'll be hanged! [*Aſide.*

Val. You ſee what Diſguiſes Love makes us put on. Gods have been in counterfeited Shapes for the ſame

Reaſon; and the divine Part of me, my Mind, has worn this Maſque of Madneſs, and this motley Livery, only as the Slave of Love, and menial Creature of your Beauty.

Ang. Mercy on me, how he talks!—poor *Valentine!*

Val. Nay, Faith, now let us underſtand one another, Hypocriſy apart.—The Comedy draws toward an End; and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourſelves; and, ſince you have loved me, you muſt own, I have at length deſerved you ſhould confeſs it.

Ang. ſighs. I would I had loved you!—for, Heaven knows, I pity you; and, could I have foreſeen the bad Effects, I would have ſtriven; but that's too late!

[*Sighs.*

Valent. What ſad Effects? what's too late?—My ſeeming Madneſs has deceived my Father, and procured me Time to think of Means to reconcile me to him, and preſerve the Right of my Inheritance to his Eſtate; which otherwiſe, by Articles, I muſt this Morning have reſigned. And this I had informed you of To-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

Ang. How! I thought your Love of me had cauſed this Tranſport in your Soul; which, it ſeems, you only counterfeited for mercenary Ends and ſordid Intereſt.

Val. Nay, now you do me Wrong; for, if any Intereſt was conſidered, it was yours; ſince I thought I wanted more than Love, to make me worthy of you.

Ang. Then you thought me mercenary—But how am I deluded, by this Interval of Senſe, to reaſon with a Madman?

Val. Oh, 'tis barbarous to miſunderſtand me longer.

SCENE

SCENE XIX.

[*To them*] JEREMY.

Ang. Oh here's a reaſonable Creature—ſure he will not have the Impudence to perſevere!—Come, *Jeremy*, acknowledge your Trick, and confeſs your Maſter's Madneſs counterfeit.

Jeremy. Counterfeit, Madam! I'll maintain him to be as abſolutely and ſubſtantially mad, as any Freeholder in *Bedlam*. Nay, he's as mad as any Projector, Fanatick, Chemiſt, Lover, or Poet, in *Europe*.

Val. Sirrah, you lie; I am not mad.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! you ſee he denies it.

Jeremy. O Lord, Madam, did you ever know any Madman mad enough to own it?

Val. Sot, can't you apprehend?

Ang. Why, he talked very ſenſibly juſt now.

Jeremy. Yes, Madam; he has Intervals: but you ſee he begins to look wild again now.

Val. Why you thick-ſkulled Raſcal, I tell you the Farce is done, and I'll be mad no longer. [*Beats him.*

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! is he mad or no, *Jeremy*?

Jeremy. Partly, I think—for he does not know his own Mind two Hours.—I'm ſure I left him juſt now in the Humour to be mad: and I think I have not found him very quiet at this preſent. Who's there? [*One knocks.*

Val. Go ſee, you Sot. I'm very glad that I can move your Mirth, though not your Compaſſion.

Ang. I did not think you had Apprehenſion enough to be exceptious: but Madmen ſhew themſelves moſt, by over pretending to a ſound Underſtanding, as drunken Men do by over-acting Sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you, till I accidentally touched upon your tender Part. But now you have reſtored me to my former Opinion and Compaſſion.

Jeremy. Sir, your Father has ſent, to know if you are any better yet.—Will you pleaſe to be mad, Sir, or how?

Val. Stupidity! You know the Penalty of all I'm worth muſt pay for the Confeſſion of my Senſes. I'm mad, and will be mad, to every body but this Lady.

Jeremy. So;—juſt the very Back-ſide of Truth.—But Lying is a Figure in Speech, that interlards the greateſt Part of my Converſation.—Madam, your Ladyſhip's Woman.

SCENE XX.

VALENTINE, ANGELICA, JENNY.

Ang. Well, have you been there?—Come hither.

Jenny. Yes, Madam; Sir *Sampſon* will wait upon you preſently. [*Aſide to* Angelica.

Val. You are not leaving me in this Uncertainty?

Ang. Would any thing but a Madman complain of Uncertainty? Uncertainty and Expectation are the Joys of Life. Security is an inſipid Thing; and the overtaking and poſſeſſing of a Wiſh, diſcovers the Folly of the Chace. Never let us know one another better; for the Pleaſure of a Maſquerade is done, when we come to ſhew our Faces. But I'll tell you two Things before I leave you; I am not the Fool you take me for; and you are mad, and don't know it.

SCENE XXI.

VALENTINE, JEREMY.

Val. From a Riddle, you can expect nothing but a Riddle. There's my Inſtruction, and the Moral of my Leſſon.

Jeremy.

Jeremy. What, is the Lady gone again, Sir? I hope you underſtood one another before ſhe went?

Val. Underſtood! She is harder to be underſtood than a Piece of *Ægyptian* Antiquity, or an *Iriſh* Manuſcript; you may pore till you ſpoil your Eyes, and not improve your Knowledge.

Jeremy. I have heard them ſay, Sir, they read hard *Hebrew* Books backwards. May be you begin to read at the wrong End!

Val. They ſay ſo of a Witch's Prayer; and Dreams and *Dutch* Almanacks are to be underſtood by Contraries. But there is regularity and Method in that; ſhe is a Medal without a Reverſe or Inſcription, for Indifference has both Sides alike. Yet, while ſhe does not ſeem to hate me, I will purſue her, and know her if it be poſſible, in ſpight of the Opinion of my ſatirical Friend *Scandal*, who ſays,

That Women are like Tricks by Slight of Hand;
Which, to admire, we ſhould not underſtand.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

****

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Room in FORESIGHT's *Houſe.*

ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Ang. WHERE is Sir *Sampſon?* Did you not tell me, he would be here before me?

Jenny. He's at the great Glaſs in the Dining-room, Madam, ſetting his Cravat and Wig.

Ang. How! I'm glad on't—If he has a Mind I ſhould like him, it's a Sign he likes me; and that's more than half my Deſign.

Jenny. I hear him, Madam.

Ang. Leave me; and, d'ye hear, if *Valentine* ſhould come, or ſend, I am not to be ſpoken with.

SCENE II.

ANGELICA, *Sir* SAMPSON.

Sir *Sampſ.* I have not been honoured with the Commands of a fair Lady a great while.—Odd, Madam, you have revived me—not ſince I was five and thirty.

Ang. Why, you have no great Reaſon to complain, Sir *Sampſon*; that is not long ago.

Sir *Sampſ.* Zooks, but it is, Madam, a very great while; to a Man that admires a fine Woman as much as I do.

Ang. You're an abſolute Courtier, Sir *Sampſon.*

Sir *Sampſ.* Not at all, Madam. Ods-bud you wrong me; I am not ſo old neither, to be a bare Courtier, only a Man of Words. Odd, I have warm Blood about me yet, and can ſerve a Lady any Way.—Come, come, let me tell you, you Women think a Man old too ſoon, faith and troth you do. Come, don't deſpiſe Fifty; odd, Fifty, in a hale Conſtitution, is no ſuch contemptible Age!

Ang. Fifty a contemptible Age! Not at all: a very faſhionable Age, I think—I aſſure you, I know very conſiderable Beaux, that ſet a good Face upon Fifty.—Fifty! I have ſeen Fifty in a Side-box, by Candle-Light, out-bloſſom Five-and-twenty.

Sir *Sampſ.* Outſides, Outſides; a pize take them, meer Outſides. Hang your Side-box Beaux; no, I'm none of thoſe, none of your forced Trees, that pretend to bloſſom in the Fall; and bud when they ſhould

ſhould bring forth Fruit. I am of a long-lived Race, and inherit Vigour. None of my Anceſtors married till Fifty; yet they begot Sons and Daughters 'till Fourſcore. I am of your Patriarchs, I, a Branch of one of your *Antediluvian* Families, Fellows that the Flood could not waſh away. Well, Madam, what are your Commands? Has any young Rogue affronted you, and ſhall I cut his Throat? or—

Ang. No, Sir *Sampſon*, I have no Quarrel upon my Hands—I have more Occaſion for your Conduct than your Courage at this Time. To tell you the Truth, I'm weary of living ſingle, and want a Huſband.

Sir *Samp.* Odſbud, and it is Pity you ſhould!—Odd, would ſhe would like me! then I ſhould hamper my young Rogues: odd, would ſhe would; faith and troth, ſhe's deviliſh handſome! [*Aſide.*]—Madam, you deſerve a good Huſband! and 'twere Pity you ſhould be thrown away upon any of theſe young idle Rogues about the Town. Odd, there's ne'er a young Fellow worth hanging—that is, a *very* young Fellow—Pize on them, they never think beforehand of any Thing—and if they commit Matrimony, 'tis as they commit Murder; out of a Frolick: and are ready to hang themſelves, or to be hanged by the Law, the next Morning.—Odſo, have a Care, Madam.

Ang. Therefore I aſk your Advice, Sir *Sampſon*. I have Fortune enough to make any Man eaſy that I can like; if there were ſuch a thing as a young agreeable Man, with a reaſonable Stock of Good-nature and Senſe—for I would neither have an abſolute Wit, nor a Fool.

Sir *Samp.* Odd, you are hard to pleaſe, Madam: to find a young Fellow that is neither a Wit in his own Eye, nor a Fool in the Eye of the World, is a very hard Taſk. But, faith and troth, you ſpeak very diſcreetly; for I hate both a Wit and a Fool.

Ang. She that marries a Fool, Sir *Sampſon*, forfeits the Reputation of her Honeſty or Underſtanding: and ſhe that marries a very witty Man, is a Slave to the Severity and inſolent Conduct of her Huſband. I ſhould like a Man of Wit for a Lover, becauſe I would have ſuch an one in my Power: but I would no more be his Wife, than his Enemy; for his Malice is not a more terrible Conſequence of his Averſion, than his Jealouſy is of his Love.

Sir *Sampſ.* None of old *Foreſight's Sibyls* ever uttered ſuch a Truth. Odſbud, you have won my Heart. I hate a Wit; I had a Son that was ſpoilt among them; a good hopeful Lad, till he learnt to be a Wit —and might have riſen in the State.—But, a Pox on't, his Wit ran him out of his Money, and now his Poverty has run him out of his Wits.

Angel. Sir *Sampſon*, as your Friend, I muſt tell you, you are very much abuſed in that Matter—he's no more mad than you are.

Sir *Sampſ.* How, Madam! Would I could prove it!

Ang. I can tell you how that may be done—but it is a Thing that would make me appear to be too much concerned in your Affairs.

Sir *Sampſ.* Odſbud, I believe ſhe likes me! [*Aſide.*] —Ah, Madam, all my Affairs are ſcarce worthy to be laid at your Feet; and I wiſh, Madam, they were in a better Poſture, that I might make a more becoming Offer to a Lady of your incomparable Beauty and Merit.—If I had *Peru* in one Hand, and *Mexico* in t'other, and the *Eaſtern* Empire under my Feet; it would make me only a more glorious Victim, to be offered at the Shrine of your Beauty.

Ang. Bleſs me, Sir *Sampſon*, what's the Matter?

Sir *Sampſ.* Odd, Madam, I love you—and if you would take my Advice in a Huſband—

Ang. Hold, hold, Sir *Sampſon*. I aſked your Advice for a Husband, and you are giving me your Conſent.—

ſent.—I was indeed thinking to propoſe ſomething like it in Jeſt, to ſatisfy you about *Valentine*: for, if a Match were ſeemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his Diſguiſe of Madneſs, in Apprehenſion of loſing me; for, you know, he has long pretended a Paſſion for me.

Sir *Samps.* Gadzooks, a moſt ingenious Contrivance—if we were to go through with it! But why muſt the Match only be *ſeemingly* carried on?—Odd, let it be a real Contract.

Ang. O fie, Sir *Sampſon!* what would the World ſay?

Sir *Samps.* Say? They would ſay, you were a wiſe Woman, and I a happy Man. Odd, Madam, I'll love you as long as I live; and leave you a good Jointure when I die.

Ang. Ay; but that is not in your Power, Sir *Sampſon*; for, when *Valentine* confeſſes himſelf in his Senſes, he muſt make over his Inheritance to his younger Brother.

Sir *Samps.* Odd, you're cunning, a wary Baggage. Faith and Troth, I like you the better.—But, I warrant you, I have a Proviſo in the Obligation in Favour of myſelf.—Body o'me, I have a Trick to turn the Settlement upon the Iſſue Male of our Two Bodies begotten. Odsbud, let us find Children, and I'll find an Eſtate!

Ang. Will you? Well, do you find the Eſtate, and leave the other to me!

Sir *Samps.* O Rogue! But I'll truſt you. And will you conſent? Is it a Match then?

Ang. Let me conſult my Lawyer concerning this Obligation; and if I find what you propoſe practicable, I'll give you my Anſwer.

Sir *Samps.* With all my Heart. Come in with me, and I'll lend you the Bond.—You ſhall conſult your Lawyer, and I'll conſult a Parſon. Odzooks, I'm a young

Man; Odzooks, I'm a young Man, and I'll make it appear—Odd, you're deviliſh handſome. Faith and Troth, you're very handſome; and I'm very young, and very luſty.—Odsbud, Huſſy, you know how to chuſe! and ſo do I.—Odd, I think we are very well met.—Give me your Hand; odd, let me kiſs it; 'tis as warm and as ſoft—as what?—odd, as t'other Hand!—Give me t'other Hand; and I'll mumble them, and kiſs them, till, they melt in my Mouth.

Ang. Hold, Sir *Sampſon!*—You're profuſe of your Vigour before your Time. You'll ſpend your Eſtate before you come to it.

Sir *Sampſ.* No, no, only give you a Rent Roll of my Poſſeſſions—Ah! Baggage!—I warrant you for little *Sampſon*. Odd, *Sampſon* is a very good Name for an able Fellow. Your *Sampſons* were ſtrong Dogs from the Beginning.

Ang. Have a Care, and don't over-act your Part.—If you remember, *Sampſon*, the ſtrongeſt of the Name, pulled an old Houſe over his Head at laſt.

Sir *Sampſ.* Say you ſo, Huſſy?—Come, let's go then; odd, I long to be pulling too. Come away.—Odſo, here's ſomebody coming.

SCENE III.

TATTLE, JEREMY.

Tatt. Is not that ſhe, gone out juſt now?

Jeremy. Ay, Sir, ſhe's juſt going to the Place of Appointment. Ah, Sir, if you are not very faithful and cloſe in this Buſineſs, you'll certainly be the Death of a Perſon that has a moſt extraordinary Paſſion for your Honour's Service.

Tatt. Ay, who's that?

Jeremy. Even my unworthy ſelf, Sir.—Sir, I have had an Appetite to be fed with your Commands a great while

while—And now, Sir, my former Maſter having much troubled the Fountain of his Underſtanding, it is a very plauſible Occaſion for me to quench my Thirſt at the Spring of your Bounty.—I thought I could not recommend myſelf better to you, Sir, than by the Delivery of a great Beauty and Fortune into your Arms, whom I have heard you ſigh for.

Tat. I'll make thy Fortune; ſay no more.—Thou art a pretty Fellow, and canſt carry a Meſſage to a Lady, in a pretty ſoft Kind of Phraſe, and with a good perſuading Accent.

Jeremy. Sir, I have the Seeds of Rhetorick and Oratory in my Head—I have been at *Cambridge*.

Tatt. Ay; 'tis well enough for a Servant to be bred at an Univerſity: but the Education is a little too pedantic for a Gentleman. I hope you are ſecret in your Nature, private, cloſe, ha?

Jeremy. O Sir, for that, Sir, 'tis my chief Talent; I'm as ſecret as the Head of *Nilus*.

Tatt. Ay? who's he, though? A Privy-Counſellor?

Jeremy. O Ignorance! [*Aſide.*]—A cunning *Egyptian*, Sir, that with his Arms would over-run the Country, yet nobody could ever find out his Head-Quarters.

Tatt. Cloſe Dog! A good Whoremaſter, I warrant him!—The Time draws nigh, *Jeremy*. *Angelica* will be veiled like a Nun; and I muſt be hooded like a Friar; ha, *Jeremy?*

Jeremy. Ay, Sir, hooded like a Hawk, to ſeize at firſt Sight upon the Quarry. It is the Whim of my Maſter's Madneſs to be ſo dreſſed; and ſhe is ſo in Love with him, ſhe'll comply with any Thing to pleaſe him. Poor Lady! I'm ſure ſhe'll have Reaſon to pray for me, when ſhe finds what a happy Exchange ſhe has made, between a Madman and ſo accompliſhed a Gentleman.

Tatt.

Tatt. Ay, Faith, ſo ſhe will, *Jeremy:* You're a good Friend to her, poor Creature!—I ſwear I do it hardly ſo much in Conſideration of my ſelf, as Compaſſion to her.

Jeremy. 'Tis an Act of Charity, Sir, to ſave a fine Woman with thirty thouſand Pounds from throwing herſelf away.

Tatt. So 'tis, faith!—I might have ſaved ſeveral others in my Time; but, egad I could never find in my Heart to marry any body before.

Jeremy. Well, Sir, I'll go and tell her my Maſter's coming; and meet you in half a Quarter of an Hour, with your Diſguiſe, at your own Lodgings. You muſt talk a little madly; ſhe won't diſtinguiſh the Tone of your Voice.

Tatt. No, no, let me alone for a Counterfeit.—I'll be ready for you.

SCENE IV.

TATTLE, *Miſs* PRUE.

Miſs *Prue.* O, Mr. *Tattle*, are you here? I'm glad I have found you. I have been looking up and down for you like any Thing, till I'm as tired as any Thing in the World.

Tatt. O Pox! how ſhall I get rid of this fooliſh Girl? [*Aſide.*

Miſs *Prue.* O, I have pure News, I can tell you pure News—I muſt not marry the Seaman now—my Father ſays ſo. Why won't you be my Huſband? You ſay you love me! and you won't be my Huſband. And I know you may be my Husband now, if you pleaſe.

Tatt. O fie, Miſs! who told you ſo, Child?

Miſs *Prue.* Why, my Father—I told him that you loved me.

Tatt.

Tatt. O fie, Miſs! why did you do ſo? And who told you ſo, Child?

Miſs *Prue.* Who? Why you did; did not you?

Tatt. O Pox, that was Yeſterday, Miſs; that was a great while ago, Child. I have been aſleep ſince; ſlept a whole Night, and did not ſo much as dream of the Matter.

Miſs *Prue.* Pſhaw! O but I dreamt that it was ſo though.

Tatt. Ay, but your Father will tell you that Dreams come by Contraries, Child.—O fie! what, we muſt not love one another now.—Pſhaw, that would be a fooliſh Thing indeed.—Fie, fie, you're a Woman now, and muſt think of a new Man every Morning, and forget him every Night.—No, no, to marry is to be a Child again, and play with the ſame Rattle always: O fie, marrying is a paw Thing!

Miſs *Prue.* Well, but don't you love me as well as you did laſt Night then?

Tatt. No, no, Child, you would not have me.

Miſs *Prue.* No? Yes but I would though.

Tatt. Pſhaw, but I tell you, you would not.—You forget you are a Woman, and don't know your own Mind.

Miſs *Prue.* But here's my Father, and he knows my Mind.

SCENE V.

[*To them*] FORESIGHT.

Foreſ. O, Mr. *Tattle*, your Servant, you are a cloſe Man; but methinks your Love to my Daughter was a Secret I might have been truſted with!—or had you a Mind to try if I could diſcover it by my Art?—Hum, ha! I think there is ſomething in your Phyſiognomy, that has a Reſemblance of her; and the Girl is like me.

Tatt.

Tatt. And ſo you would infer, that you and I are alike—What does the old Prig mean? I'll banter him, and laugh at him, and leave him. [*Aſide.*]—Ifancy you have a wrong Notion of Faces.

Foreſ. How? what? a wrong Notion! How ſo?

Tatt. In the Way of Art, I have ſome taking Features, not obvious to vulgar Eyes, that are Indications of a ſudden Turn of good Fortune, in the Lottery of Wives; and promiſe a great Beauty and great Fortune reſerved alone for me, by a private Intrigue of Deſtiny, kept ſecret from the piercing Eye of Perſpicuity, from all Aſtrologers, and the Stars themſelves.

Foreſ. How? I will make it appear, that what you ſay is impoſſible.

Tatt. Sir, I beg your Pardon, I am in haſte—

Foreſ. For what?

Tatt. To be married, Sir—married.

Foreſ. Ay, but pray take me along with you, Sir.

Tatt. No, Sir; it is to be done privately—I never make Confidents.

Foreſ. Well; but my Conſent, I mean.—You won't marry my Daughter without my Conſent?

Tatt. Who I, Sir? I am an abſolute Stranger to you and your Daughter, Sir.

Foreſ. Hey-day! What Time of the Moon is this?

Tatt. Very true, Sir; and deſire to continue ſo. I have no more Love for your Daughter, than I have Likeneſs of you: and I have a Secret in my Heart, which you would be glad to know, and ſhan't know; and yet you ſhall know it too, and be ſorry for it afterwards. I'd have you to know, Sir, that I am as knowing as the Stars, and as ſecret as the Night. And I'm going to be married juſt now, yet did not know of it half an Hour ago; and the Lady ſtays for me, and does not know of it yet.—There's a Myſtery for you.—I know you love to untie Difficulties.—Or if you can't

can't ſolve this; ſtay here a Quarter of an Hour, and I'll come and explain it to you.

SCENE VI.

FORESIGHT, *Miſs* PRUE.

Miſs *Prue.* O Father, why will you let him go? Won't you make him to be my Husband?

Foreſ. Mercy on us, what do theſe Lunacies portend? Alas! he's mad, Child, ſtark wild.

Miſs *Prue.* What, and muſt not I have e'er a Husband then? What, muſt I go to Bed to Nurſe again, and be a Child as long as ſhe's an old Woman? Indeed, but I won't. For, now my Mind is ſet upon a Man, I will have a Man ſome Way or other. Oh! methinks I'm ſick when I think of a Man; and if I can't have one, I would go to ſleep all my Life: for when I'm awake, it makes me wiſh and long, and I don't know for what—and I'd rather be always aſleep, than ſick with thinking.

Foreſ. O fearful! I think the Girl's influenced too.—Huſſy, you ſhall have a Rod.

Miſs *Prue.* A Fiddle of a Rod! I'll have a Husband; and if you won't get me one, I'll get one for myſelf. I'll marry our *Robin* the Butler: he ſays, he loves me; and he's a handſome Man, and ſhall be my Husband: I warrant he'll be my Husband, and thank me too; for he told me ſo.

SCENE VII.

[*To them*] SCANDAL, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, *and* NURSE.

Foreſ. Did he ſo?—I'll diſpatch him for it preſently! Rogue!—Oh, Nurſe, come hither.

Nurſe. What is your Worſhip's Pleaſure?

Foreſ. Here take your young Miſtreſs, and lock her up preſently, till farther Orders from me.—Not a Word,

Word, Huſſy—Do what I bid you. No Reply: away. And bid *Robin* make ready to give an Account of his Plate and Linen, d'ye hear? Be gone, when I bid you.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* What's the Matter, Huſband?

Foreſ. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now—Mr. *Scandal*, Heaven keep us all in our Senſes!—I fear there is a contagious Frenzy abroad. How does *Valentine*?

Scand. O, I hope he will do well again.—I have a Meſſage from him to your Niece *Angelica*.

Foreſ. I think ſhe has not returned, ſince ſhe went abroad with Sir *Sampſon*. Nurſe, why are you not gone?

SCENE VIII.

FORESIGHT, SCANDAL, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, BEN.

Foreſ. Here's Mr. *Benjamin*; he can tell us if his Father be come home.

Ben. Who? Father? Ay, he's come, home with a Vengeance.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Why, what's the Matter?

Ben. Matter! Why, he's mad.

Foreſ. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

Ben. And there's the handſome young Woman, ſhe, as they ſay, Brother *Val.* went mad for, ſhe's mad too, I think.

Foreſ. O my poor Niece! my poor Niece! is ſhe gone too? Well, I ſhall run mad next.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Well, but how mad? how d'ye mean?

Ben. Nay, I'll give you Leave to gueſs—I'll undertake to make a Voyage to *Antigua*—no, I mayn't ſay ſo neither—but I'll ſail as far as *Leghorn*, and back again, before you ſhall gueſs at the Matter, and do nothing

nothing elſe. Meſs, you may take in all the Points of the Compaſs, and not hit right.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Your Experiment will take up a little too much Time.

Ben. Why then I'll tell you: There's a new Wedding upon the Stocks, and they two are going to be married to rights.

Scand. Who?

Ben. Why Father, and—the young Woman. I can't hit of her Name.

Scand. Angelica?

Ben. Ay, the ſame.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* Sir *Sampſon* and *Angelica?* Impoſſible!

Ben. That may be—but I'm ſure it is as I tell you.

Scand. 'Sdeath, it is a Jeſt. I can't believe it.

Ben. Look you, Friend; it is nothing to me, whether you believe it or no. What I ſay is true; d'ye ſee, they are married, or juſt going to be married, I know not which.

Foreſ. Well, but they are not mad, that is, not lunatic?

Ben. I don't know what you may call Madneſs—but ſhe's mad for a Huſband, and he's Horn-mad, I think, or they'd never make a Match together.—Here they come.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] *Sir* SAMPSON, ANGELICA, BUCKRAM.

Sir *Sampſ.* Where is this old Soothſayer? this Uncle of mine elect?—Aha! old *Foreſight!* Uncle *Foreſight!* wiſh me Joy, Uncle *Foreſight*, double Joy, both as Uncle and Aſtrologer; here's a Conjunction that was not foretold in all your *Ephemeris!*—The brighteſt Star in the blue Firmament—is *ſhot from above, in a Jelly of Love*, and ſo forth; and I'm Lord of the Aſcendant. Odd, you're an old Fellow, *Foreſight*, Uncle I mean,

I mean; a very old Fellow, Uncle *Foreſight*; and yet you ſhall live to dance at my Wedding; faith and troth you ſhall. Odd, we'll have the Muſick of the Spheres for thee, old *Lilly*, that we will; and thou ſhalt lead up a Dance in *Via Lactea*.

Foreſ. I'm Thunder-ſtruck! You are not married to my Niece?

Sir *Sampſ.* Not abſolutely married, Uncle; but very near it; within a Kiſs of the Matter, as you ſee.

[*Kiſſes* Angelica.

Ang. 'Tis very true indeed, Uncle; I hope you'll be my Father, and give me.

Sir *Sampſ.* That he ſhall, or I'll burn his Globes.—Body o'me, he ſhall be thy Father: I'll make him thy Father, and thou ſhalt make me a Father, and I'll make thee a Mother; and we'll beget Sons and Daughters enough to put the Weekly Bills out of Countenance.

Scand. Death and Hell! Where's *Valentine*?

SCENE X.

Sir SAMPSON, ANGELICA, FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, BEN, BUCKRAM.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* This is ſo ſurprizing—

Sir *Sampſ.* How! What does my Aunt ſay? Surprizing, Aunt? Not at all, for a young Couple to make a Match in Winter! Not at all—It's a Plot to undermine cold Weather, and deſtroy that Uſurper of a Bed called a Warming-pan.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* I'm glad to hear you have ſo much Fire in you, Sir *Sampſon*.

Ben. Meſs, I fear his Fire's little better than Tinder; mayhap it will only ſerve to light up a Match for ſomebody elſe. The young Woman's a handſome young Woman, I can't deny it: but, Father, if I might

might be your Pilot in this Caſe, you ſhould not marry her. It is juſt the ſame Thing as if ſo be you ſhould ſail ſo far as *The Straights* without Proviſion.

Sir *Samp.* Who gave you Authority to ſpeak, Sirrah? To your Element, Fiſh; be mute, Fiſh, and to Sea. Rule your Helm, Sirrah; don't direct me.

Ben. Well, well, take you Care of your own Helm; or you mayn't keep your new Veſſel ſteady.

Sir *Samp.* Why, you impudent Tarpaulin! Sirrah, do you bring your Forecaſtle Jeſts upon your Father? But I ſhall be even with you; I won't give you a Groat. Mr. *Buckram*, is the Conveyance ſo worded, that nothing can poſſibly deſcend to this Scoundrel? I would not ſo much as have him have the Proſpect of an Eſtate, though there were no Way to come to it, but by the *North-Eaſt* Paſſage.

Buckram. Sir, it is drawn according to your Directions; there is not the leaſt Cranny of the Law unſtopt.

Ben. Lawyer, I believe there's many a Cranny and Leak unſtopt in your Conſcience!—If ſo be that one had a Pump to your Boſom, I believe we ſhould diſcover a foul Hold. They ſay, a Witch will ſail in a Sieve—but I believe the Devil would not venture aboard your Conſcience. And that's for you.

Sir *Samp.* Hold your Tongue, Sirrah.—How now? who's here?

SCENE XI.

[*To them*] TATTLE, *and Mrs.* FRAIL.

Mrs. *Frail.* O, Siſter, the moſt unlucky Accident!

Mrs. *Foreſ.* What's the Matter?

Tatt. O, the two moſt unfortunate poor Creatures in the World we are!

Foreſ. Bleſs us! how ſo?

Mrs. *Frail.* Ah, Mr. *Tattle* and I, poor Mr. *Tattle* and I are—I can't ſpeak it out.

Tatt. Nor I—But poor Mrs. *Frail* and I are—

Mrs. *Frail.* Married.

Foreſ. Married! How?

Tatt. Suddenly—before we know where we were—that Villain *Jeremy*, by the Help of Diſguiſes, trickt us into one another.

Foreſ. Why, you told me juſt now, you went hence in Haſte to be married!

Ang. But, I believe, Mr. *Tattle* meant the Favour to me, I thank him.

Tatt. I did, as I hope to be ſaved, Madam; my Intentions were good.—But this is the moſt cruel Thing, to marry one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore.—The Devil take me, if ever I was ſo much concerned at any Thing in my Life.

Ang. 'Tis very unhappy, if you don't care for one another.

Tatt. The leaſt in the World—that is, for my Part, I ſpeak for myſelf. Gad, I never had the leaſt Thought of ſerious Kindneſs—I never liked any body leſs in my Life. Poor Woman! Gad, I'm ſorry for her too; for I have no Reaſon to hate her neither; but I believe I ſhall lead her a damned Sort of a Life.

Mrs. *Foreſ.* He's better than no Huſband at all—though he's a Coxcomb. [*To* Frail.

Mrs. *Frail* [*to her.*] Ay, ay, it's well it's no worſe—Nay, for my Part, I always deſpiſed Mr. *Tattle* of all Things; nothing but his being my Huſband could have made me like him leſs.

Tatt. Look you there, I thought as much!—Pox on't, I wiſh we could keep it ſecret; why I don't believe any of this Company would ſpeak of it.

Mrs. *Frail.* But, my Dear, that's impoſſible; the Parſon and that Rogue *Jeremy* will publiſh it.

Tatt.

Tatt. Ay, my Dear, ſo they will, as you ſay.

Ang. O you'll agree very well in a little Time; Cuſtom will make it eaſy to you.

Tatt. Eaſy! Pox on't, I don't believe I ſhall ſleep To-night.

Sir *Sampſ.* Sleep, quotha! No, why you would not ſleep on your Wedding-night? I'm an older Fellow than you, and don't mean to ſleep.

Ben. Why there's another Match now, as thof a Couple of Privateers were looking for a Prize, and ſhould fall foul of one another. I'm ſorry for the young Man with all my Heart. Look you, Friend, if I may adviſe you, when ſhe's going—for that you muſt expect, I have Experience of her—when ſhe's going, let her go. For no Matrimony is tough enough to hold her; and if ſhe can't drag her Anchor along with her, ſhe'll break her Cable, I can tell you that.—Who's here? the Madman?

SCENE *The Laſt.*

VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *Sir* SAMPSON, ANGELICA, FORESIGHT, *Mrs.* FORESIGHT, TATTLE, *Mrs.* FRAIL, BEN, JEREMY, BUCKRAM.

Val. No; here's the Fool; and, if Occaſion be, I'll give it under my Hand.

Sir *Sampſ.* How now?

Val. Sir, I'm come to acknowledge my Errors, and aſk your Pardon.

Sir *Sampſ.* What, have you found your Senſes at laſt then? In good Time, Sir.

Val. You were abuſed, Sir; I never was diſtracted.

Foreſ. How! not mad! Mr. *Scandal?*

Scand. No, really, Sir; I'm his Witneſs, it was all counterfeit.

Val. I thought I had Reaſons—but it was a poor Contrivance: the Effect has ſhewn it ſuch.

Sir

Sir *Sampſ.* Contrivance! what, to cheat me? to cheat your Father! Sirrah, could you hope to proſper?

Val. Indeed, I thought, Sir, when the Father endeavoured to undo the Son, it was a reaſonable Return of Nature.

Sir *Sampſ.* Very good, Sir.—Mr. *Buckram*, are you ready?—Come, Sir, will you ſign and ſeal?

Val. If you pleaſe, Sir; but firſt I would aſk this Lady one Queſtion.

Sir *Sampſ.* Sir, you muſt aſk me Leave firſt.—That Lady? No, Sir; you ſhall aſk that Lady no Queſtions, till you have aſked her Bleſſing, Sir. That Lady is to be my Wife.

Val. I have heard as much, Sir; but I would have it from her own Mouth.

Sir *Sampſ.* That's as much as to ſay, I lie, Sir; and you don't believe what I ſay.

Val. Pardon me, Sir. But I reflect that I very lately counterfeited Madneſs: I don't know but the Frolick may go round.

Sir *Sampſ.* Come, Chuck, ſatisfy him, anſwer him.—Come, Mr. *Buckram*, the Pen and Ink.

Buckram. Here it is, Sir, with the Deed; all is ready. [Val. *goes to* Ang.

Ang. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended Love to me; nay, what if you were ſincere? Still you muſt pardon me, if I think my own Inclinations have a better Right to diſpoſe of my Perſon, than yours.

Sir *Sampſ.* Are you anſwered now, Sir?

Val. Yes, Sir.

Sir *Sampſ.* Where's your Plot, Sir? and your Contrivance now, Sir? Will you ſign, Sir? Come, will you ſign and ſeal?

Val. With all my Heart, Sir.

Scand. 'Sdeath, you are not mad indeed? to ruin yourſelf?

Val.

Val. I have been diſappointed of my only Hope; and he that loſes Hope may part with any Thing. I never valued Fortune, but as it was ſubſervient to my Pleaſure; and my only Pleaſure was, to pleaſe this Lady: I have made many vain Attempts: and find at laſt that nothing but my Ruin can effect it; which, for that Reaſon, I will ſign to.—Give me the Paper.

Ang. Generous *Valentine!* [*Aſide.*

Buckram. Here is the Deed, Sir.

Val. But where is the Bond, by which I am obliged to ſign this?

Buckram. Sir *Sampſon*, you have it.

Ang. No, I have it; and I'll uſe it, as I would every thing that is an Enemy to *Valentine*.

[*Tears the Paper.*

Sir *Sampſ.* How now?

Val. Ha!

Ang. Had I the World to give you, it could not make me worthy of ſo generous and faithful a Paſſion. Here's my Hand; my Heart was always yours, and ſtruggled very hard to make this utmoſt Trial of your Virtue. [*To* Val.

Val. Between Pleaſure and Amazement, I am loſt—But on my Knees I take the Bleſſing.

Sir *Sampſ.* Ooons, what is the Meaning of this?

Ben. Meſs, here's the Wind changed again. Father, you and I may make a Voyage together now!

Ang. Well, Sir *Sampſon*, ſince I have played you a Trick, I'll adviſe you how you may avoid ſuch another. Learn to be a good Father, or you'll never get a ſecond Wife. I always loved your Son, and hated your unforgiving Nature. I was reſolved to try him to the utmoſt; I have tried you too, and know you both. You have not more Faults than he has Virtues; and it is hardly more Pleaſure to me, that I

can make him and myſelf happy, than that I can puniſh you.

Val. If my Happineſs could receive Addition, this kind Surprize would make it double.

Sir *Sampſ.* Ooons, you're a Crocodile!

Foreſ. Really, Sir *Sampſon*, this is a ſudden Eclipſe.

Sir *Sampſ.* You're an illiterate old Fool; and I'm another.

Tatt. If the Gentleman is in Diſorder for Want of a Wife, I can ſpare him mine.—Oh, are you there, Sir? I am indebted to you for my Happineſs. [*To* Jeremy.

Jeremy. Sir, I aſk you ten thouſand Pardons: it was an errant Miſtake.—You ſee, Sir, my Maſter was never mad, nor any thing like it.—Then how could it be otherwiſe?

Val. Tattle, I thank you; you would have interpoſed between me and Heaven; but Providence laid Purgatory in your Way.—You have but Juſtice.

Scand. I hear the Fiddles that Sir *Sampſon* provided for his own Wedding; methinks it is Pity they ſhould not be employed when the Match is ſo much mended. *Valentine*, though it be Morning, we may have a Dance.

Val. Any Thing, my Friend, every thing that looks like Joy and Tranſport.

Scand. Call them, *Jeremy*.

Ang. I have done diſſembling now, *Valentine*; and if that Coldneſs which I have always worn before you ſhould turn to an extreme Fondneſs, you muſt not ſuſpect it.

Val. I'll prevent that Suſpicion—for I intend to doat to that immoderate Degree, that your Fondneſs ſhall never diſtinguiſh itſelf enough to be taken Notice of. If ever you ſeem to love too much, it muſt be only when I can't love enough.

Ang.

Ang. Have a Care of Promiſes: you know you are apt to run more in Debt than you are able to pay.

Val. Therefore I yield my Body as your Priſoner, and make your beſt on't.

Scand. The Muſick ſtays for you. [*Dance.*

[*To Ang.*] Well, Madam, you have done exemplary Juſtice, in puniſhing an inhuman Father, and rewarding a faithful Lover: but there is a third good Work, which I, in particular, muſt thank you for: I was an Infidel to your Sex, and you have converted me—for now I am convinced that all Women are not, like Fortune, blind in beſtowing Favours, either on thoſe who do not merit, or who do not want them.

Ang. It is an unreaſonable Accuſation, that you lay upon our Sex. You tax us with Injuſtice, only to cover your own Want of Merit. You would all have the Reward of Love; but few have the Conſtancy to ſtay till it becomes your Due. Men are generally Hypocrites and Infidels; they pretend to worſhip, but have neither Zeal nor Faith. How few, like *Valentine*, would perſevere even to Martyrdom, and ſacrifice their Intereſt to their Conſtancy! In admiring me, you miſplace the Novelty.

The Miracle To-day is, that we find
A Lover true: not that a Woman's kind.

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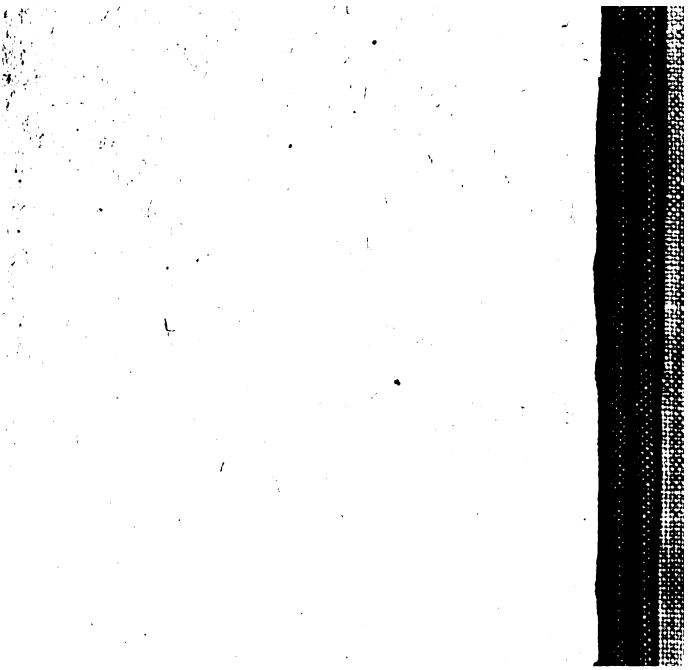

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